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THE UNIT OF STRIFE



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THE UNIT OF STRIFE

BY

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I

INTRODUCTION

THE UNIT OF STRIFE

. I

INTRODUCTION

WHEN man looks round about him on the innumerable living things which are demanding existence under whatever form existence can be best secured , and when he turns from those forms beneath him, which have been arrived at through the agency of this insistent struggle—to himself, the highest outcome of the strife, he can but feel perplexed as to the nature of the gulf which has been placed between himself and them. The change has been so momentous that for many ages he failed to recognise his ancestry ; to his own seeming he was cut off from the forms from which he was derived. He gladly believed in his affinity to the God he had found, and ignored his relationship to those other forms by which he saw himself surrounded.

Moreover, the initial stages of the change, which has placed him by so many strides in the

forefront of creation, took place in that border-land which lies, as it were, between sleeping and waking, between unconscious and conscious life, and the conclusions as to his own origin which he arrived at in that dim twilight of the mind have remained with him, to hinder and confuse his further enlightenment. From time to time he has revised his conclusions and enlarged their scope ; but the bondage of his old certainties remains with him still. He is held back from knowing more by the incubus of that which he thinks he knows, by traditions with which his thought is imbued, by conclusions so closely bound up with forces which he accepts as main factors in his progress, that it seems to him as if in parting with them he would be parting with the very agency which has effected his deliverance.

Being stationed, moreover, in the midst of the process of his own development, his perception of the lines on which it is being achieved is still further hindered by the limitations of his outlook. His physical sight is falsified at all times by the exaggerated appearance of those things which are near at hand in comparison with things as great, or greater, which are farther off ; and his mental outlook, which continually corrects the physical, is in the same way circumscribed in its turn. In things of time the present assumes undue preponderance, while the events of past ages, like hills on the

horizon, are crowded into a space trifling in comparison with the events of one individual life. He finds it difficult to estimate rightly the relative importance of to-day's events, to piece them in with the laws which have fashioned and stereotyped the innumerable forms under which the struggle for existence has been maintained. Man's present stage of progress looms so large in his own outlook that he tends to regard it as a final manifestation of development, and himself as the flower of all the ages, rather than as a phase of a process which is still being furthered, a momentary aspect of the working of laws which are leading on towards issues which he cannot yet foresee.

And although at the present time, in spite of the limitations of his outlook, in spite of the inheritance of knowledge true and false, which has confused him, man has learnt to trace out many of the laws which have fashioned the forms of life which have preceded him, and to recognise himself as the outcome from those forms—although he has learnt to realise that those laws are still at work in his own development, there still remains a gap unbridged, a point at which the laws for those forms and for himself appear to be at variance, where the old laws seem to falter in their action, and a law new or undefined seems to assert itself and modify the lines on which his development is being achieved.

It will be granted that development proceeds by means of natural selection working through the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence ; but with man we witness the fact that development is not stayed even though the unfit of all kinds are carefully kept alive, and this most effectually where civilisation and progress have made the greatest strides.

It may be urged that with man mental fitness has become the main factor in his progress, and that it is in consequence of his superior mental fitness that he has become pre-eminent and still continues to advance. But the fact remains that with man the mentally feeble and unfit are as carefully kept alive as the physically unfit, and, this also, most effectually where civilisation is at its highest point.

Again, in the struggle for life below man each individual, with but few exceptions and for a limited period, strives only in his own interest ; consideration for the interests of others would imply failure for those who showed the consideration, and degeneration for those to whom consideration was shown.

Whereas with man, consideration for the needs of others, within certain limits, has become an essential qualification for survival, and the widest scope and highest quality of consideration are found wherever human progress is the most advanced.

It seems evident, if this is admitted, that with man the quality of fitness to survive has in some way become modified, that an agency has come into play which had not asserted itself on the same lines in the struggle for life before the appearance of man, an agency which would seem to be connected with man's advance to his present position, where he stands emancipated from the struggle with those other of life's forms which, with but few exceptions, he has made the subjects of his will.

It is the aim of the following pages to suggest the nature of this agency, to formulate a theory which may be found to fit the facts of development as yet understood, to suggest a reading of the established law of life which may enable it to include within its domain the facts of human as of all other development. It is an aspect of human progress which appears to be in the air, an argument of which it would seem the major premises are being stated on every side, although the conclusions which seem to the writer inevitable may not yet have been accepted. And although a sense of diffidence of necessity besets an individual mind in attempting to deal with a subject which embraces knowledge in so many of its branches, the belief that it is only a statement of that which many minds are on the brink of thinking gives a boldness which might not obtain were the lines new, the conclusions wholly unforeseen.

It is in consideration of the extent of ground which the subject covers that tolerance is asked in the following pages for failures in method of statement of the subject ; for repetitions which have seemed inevitable ; for temerity in touching on subjects without the sanction of an intimate acquaintance with their details. It is only the conviction that a truth of life underlies the theory, which, though it may need modification, will stand test, that induces the writer to bring it to the light, notwithstanding the defects of its presentment.

II

THE NATURE OF THE UNIT OF STRIFE

II

THE NATURE OF THE UNIT OF STRIFE

IN the struggle for life, which has been so insistently pursued for untold ages, two necessities appear to have been laid on every unit in the strife ; the first being to secure the means of existence as an individual, the second to grow under whatever conditions growth can best be secured. No race could survive in which these instincts did not forcibly obtain, and in life's lowest forms obedience is rendered to them in a uniform and simple way. In the most primitive organisms, those consisting of single cells, in obedience to the first instinct, each individual ministers to its own needs only, regardless of the needs of all other individuals ; the unit of self-seeking throughout life is the single self. The instinct of growth in the meanwhile is met in two ways. It is effected in the first place by an increase in size in the individual itself ; but by this means a point is inevitably arrived at where a further increase would be incompatible with successful existence. In order, therefore, that growth may continue, this primitive method has had to be modified, and success appears to have

attended those forms in which at this point the individual divided into two, by which means the further existence of the organism was facilitated and growth could proceed as before. When the size most conducive to successful existence had again been reached by the separated parts a further subdivision was effected, those portions which had divided off continuing to grow and subdivide in the same way as the original cell. By this means, in obedience to the instinct to grow, the organism was multiplied to an indefinite extent. But the resulting units had no further affinity. The interests of the parts, which had been one, became as separate as the substance of which they were composed. The new cell was as independent of the interests of the cell from which it sprang as of those of any other unrelated cell with which it came into competition in the struggle to exist. The necessity to exist as an individual compelled it to disregard the interests of all other individuals.

But a further and apparently a more successful stage was entered upon when the primitive units which were about to divide held together temporarily for purposes of offence and defence, and became tolerant of each other under stress of a common interest. It is possible that immediately after such division, while the resulting cells were adapting themselves to the new conditions, they were less competent for the moment

to survive in the struggle, and that by remaining temporarily attached the chances of survival were increased. If this were so, and if those forms succeeded best which temporarily retained the adherence of their offspring most effectively, then for the time being those adherent cells became units in the struggle to exist ; while on eventually separating to form new units they were better able to survive than those set free at an earlier stage of separate existence.

It would appear, moreover, that a still more successful method was entered upon by those forms in which the adherence between related cells became continuous, and in which, thus adherent, the cells continued to grow and subdivide ; whereupon, if those forms succeeded best which retained the adherence of their offspring, and of their offspring's offspring, most effectually and for the longest time, new forms of being must gradually have been evolved, consisting of communities of affiliated cells ; which communities in their turn became units in the struggle to exist. These composite units were able to attain to a size much greater than that of the simple unit, before the limit set by the necessities of individual existence had been reached.

The independence of the cell of the interests of all other cells for purposes of existence was thus brought into subjection to the wider law of growth, which led to mutual toleration and

co-operation within a very limited range—a co-operation brought about by a community of interest existing between related parts.

When, however, these affiliated cells began to hold together throughout life to form one organism, a further development ensued, for each individual cell was no longer occupied to the same degree in securing nourishment and defending itself against attack as when living an independent life. As part of a larger organism, while it pursued these ends as before, according to its position in the unit, one or other of these functions began to preponderate in its aims. If its position were central, its functions were specialised to distribute nourishment to the different parts of the unit, if nearer the circumference, to secure nourishment or to protect the unit from attack.

As the cells within this more composite organism continued to grow and subdivide, the resultant cells became stereotyped in the same direction of specialisation as the parent cell, and helped to swell the bulk of the organism of which they formed a part. But the power of the organism to divide when the size most conducive to successful life had thus been arrived at was obviously curtailed by this specialisation, since no part could any longer have been capable of performing all the functions of existence, each cell being suited only to exist as a component part of a larger organism. When,

therefore, by the growth and multiplication of cells within itself, the larger organism began to exceed the size conducive to successful existence, the question of a further subdivision would become complicated by the complex nature of its parts if provision were not made for growth as well as for the better method of individual survival. The primitive method of division would have resulted in parts incomplete in themselves, some cells having been specialised for the performance of one function, some of another, and the greater the complexity of the organism the greater the impossibility of division on the primitive lines.

To meet this new demand, special cells were set apart to carry on the work of growth, cells specialised for this function as all the other cells of the organism were becoming specialised for their several functions. These cells contained within themselves undeveloped the functions of all the specialised cells, and were capable of multiplying by division and of distributing the different functions among the resultant cells which were held into one organism by their inability to perform, independently, all the functions of existence. By the time, therefore, that the complex organism had achieved the size best suited to its existence, it, in turn having specialised cells of growth, could separate them off to develop into reproductions of the parent form. This new method of growth

appears to have been achieved in the simplest forms by a process slightly differing only from division, but as the cells performing other functions became more highly specialised, these cells also followed on in the same course. Eventually in the process of development two separate and differing cells were specialised for the needs of growth, and it became essential for these cells to unite before the new organism could come into being. These cells in the earliest stages were produced by one individual, but were localised in the higher forms in separate individuals, and with these the necessity of growth became an instinct in these two diverse individuals to unite for the purposes of reproduction — a process foreshadowed even in unicellular organisms by the conjugation of separated cells.

But as with the primitive cell which had divided into two individuals, so with these more complex organisms, there was no further affinity between parent and offspring when once separation had taken place. The new organism became as indifferent to the interests of the parent organism as to those of any other organism with which it came into competition in the strife for life. The duration of the period during which the parent form retained these cells of growth within itself before starting them on their independent life tended always to increase in the case of progressive forms ; but

when separation had taken place the common interest was at an end. The new organism as well as the old had to obey the instinct to exist as an individual, regardless of the needs of all other individuals.

In the stress of this incessant struggle to exist and grow, innumerable differently composed communities of these specialised cells were gradually evolved and became to a certain extent stereotyped, some proving successful through their adaptation to one element, some to another ; some holding their own through their power in attack, others in resisting or escaping attack ; some succeeding by multiplying excessively, others by producing fewer offspring more highly organised and so more capable of surviving.

If we look back at the complex forms of life which have survived, and at those which, failing to survive, have been preserved to the observation of man, it seems evident that success in life on progressive lines has been arrived at only by a continued increase in size of the individual which for the time being has constituted the unit of strife, together, at the same time, with a faculty for further increase of the individual. But it seems also evident that no individual on the main line of advance has successfully increased in size beyond a certain point unless it has increased at the same time in complexity of structure.

Thus the primitive cell could exist as an individual only when its size was inconsiderable, but a community of cells could exist as an individual and attain to proportions vastly greater than those attainable by the individual cell. A continual growth in size of the individual may be traced through the invertebrate forms, greater specialisation of the parts usually accompanying an increase in size. And when by this process of specialisation a backbone had been evolved, the possibilities of further growth in size and complexity were still further increased. It would seem, however, that here again a limit of successful size was reached, and that the Dinosaurs, Megalosaurs, and other giant products of evolution, by exceeding this point, were doomed to extinction. They seem to have overstepped the limit at which further growth was compatible with successful life on the existing lines of increase in complexity of structure.

At this point a new form of complexity seems to have been brought into play, and the growth of these still more complex individuals could proceed and eventually attain to proportions greatly in excess of those previously attained to. This new complexity of structure was achieved on the same lines as the complexity of the earliest composite organisms, namely, through the establishment of a community of related individuals which were held together by the bonds of a common interest, and specialised to

perform different functions in the larger unit. These communities, as with the primitive communities of cells, were at first only of temporary duration, but their existence became more and more prolonged, until eventually permanent communities were formed, and these grew from within, till they again exceeded the size most conducive to successful life.

For when through the ages the different functions of nutrition, defence, reproduction, &c., had been divided up among the combined cells a further point was reached at which the young of the more complex individuals, when about to separate off to an independent life, were in their turn held to their parent by the bond of a common interest. Success appears at all times to have attended those forms in which the duration of the period during which the cells of growth were retained within the parent organism tended to increase ; and, again, it appears to have attended those forms in which, after such separation, one parent at least gained the instinct to protect them in their helpless stage. Sometimes both parents subordinated their individual interests to those of their young, securing by very various means the safety of those which were to carry on the work of growth until they were properly equipped for the struggle themselves. Fewer young were produced under these more advanced conditions, but a greater number of

those which came to life came also to maturity, while the maturity of these higher forms possessed greater possibilities than the maturity more quickly attained to. During this period of immaturity in the young the family became the unit of strife.

In these cases no permanent union was effected, for the offspring on reaching a given age separated off, to become in their turn independent individuals. But a further stage was reached when the family instinct, instead of being temporary, became prolonged, and at length survived throughout life, when units were formed of a more permanent type, consisting of the offspring of common parents. These communities continued to grow from within by the multiplication of individuals and families, until the difficulty of supplying food to so many mouths or other causes outweighed the advantage of united action. When, therefore, this more permanent unit in its turn exceeded the size most conducive to successful life, individual families were thrown off, which became separate and individual units and started new communities.

Each individual of these communities, while striving primarily for its own existence, acquired also a wider instinct which compelled it to modify its own interests so as to suit the common interests of the whole flock, herd, or swarm to which it belonged. If, as seems

evident, those communities succeeded best in which this instinct of subservience most effectually obtained, then it became indirectly to the interest of the individual to subordinate its own interests to the interests of the community. And the community of related individuals in these forms became the unit of strife.

But between the parent community and the families which were separated off for further growth, no affinity remained. In the stress of competition they were as intolerant of each other as the primitive cell had been intolerant of all other cells, even of the portion of itself from which it had just separated. The necessity of insuring individual existence in each stage is stronger than the instinct of growth, until the new and more complex unit has become firmly established, and its parts sufficiently differentiated.

The communities found existing in the forms of life below man are of very various structure and consistency, as are the less complex individuals which form the component parts of these. Several methods of growth are attempted, tending to produce communities — some loosely coherent and of rapid power of increase, others more compact but less capable of growth, and others again more capable of coherence than the one form, more capable of growth than the other, and thus on a medial line securing progress and development.¹

¹ See page 44.

The individuals composing these communities remain separate from each other in physical structure throughout the term of their existence apart from the parent form, but the new bonds by which after birth they are held together, although invisible to the eye, are as effectual and binding as those which hold the cells together to form these individual members themselves. Each member of the community, by reason of its specialisation for the performance of a particular function, becomes incapacitated to some degree for the performance of the other functions of existence, and so incapable of existing apart from the community. The more advanced the complexity of the unit, the less adequate are its component parts to separate existence.

It would be as impossible for an individual forming part of a highly evolved community to live and grow in independence of the community as it would be for a cell to survive after separation from the organism of which it formed a part. The more compact the community the more impossible would such separation become. In the invertebrate bee or ant communities it would obviously be impossible for a worker attempting an independent life to reproduce its kind, or for the queen under the same circumstances to secure nourishment and protection. And among the physically less firmly consolidated vertebrate

communities, the fact that individuals or pairs of the community-forming kinds are not found existing alone, seems to prove that existence for such forms has become impossible apart from the community.

If it be granted that in this way an increase in complexity of structure is the tendency of all development in life—by which increase in complexity the individual which strives for existence is enabled constantly to increase also in size—the question arises as to how far this view is in accordance with Darwin's great fundamental law of life's development. If development proceeds by means of natural selection working through the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence, how far will this suggestion as to the nature of the fittest fulfil its conditions?

In the term "survival of the fittest" the word individual is implied; but if in place of the word "individual" the word "unit" is made use of, then development may be said to proceed by means of the survival of the fittest unit in the struggle for existence. Which will be generally allowed. The word "individual" is thus left free to describe a component part of a larger and more complex unit.

The question follows as to the nature of the fittest unit, and it is here suggested that the fittest unit is the unit best adapted, not

to existence only, but to such form of existence as is compatible with further growth. This unit is represented in the lowest forms by the individual cell ; but as life proceeds, and these cells, after dividing, hold together for purposes of a common interest, then the fittest unit ceases to be confined to the individual cell, but becomes, first temporarily, then permanently, that combination of cells in which the component parts are becoming adapted to the larger unit's needs. On these lines the unit continues to grow as an individual and to become more complex, retaining within itself the cells which continue to grow and subdivide, its own further growth being achieved by the separating off of cells which have been differentiated for the purpose of growth ; and the fittest unit at this stage is that largest community of cells in which the component parts are best adapted to the unit's needs.

When this process of growth and specialisation had continued for some of the millenniums which are needed for the work of development, especially in its early stages, a new element of complexity came into play. These composite units having reached the limit of complexity permitted by their method of growth, began further to hold together among themselves, their related parts being united by the bonds of a common interest, and in their turn becoming specialised in function. By such bonds

the family was held together for a longer or shorter time, and the family for this time became the unit in the strife. And by such bonds the larger family, the community, was held together in a permanent way to form the still larger unit of flock, herd, or swarm. It is here maintained that when an aggregate of individuals in competition with other individuals or aggregates acts as one unit, that aggregate constitutes the unit in the struggle to exist, whatever be the nature of its parts, or of the bonds by which those parts are united—the progressive efficiency of such unit being decided by its size and complexity, together with the stability of the union which is established between its related parts. The individual instinct survives in each member of the larger units, but it is no longer of the same simplicity: it is modified by the need of co-operation, and its scope is curtailed. While, therefore, under these conditions the fittest unit is the largest and most cohesive community, the fittest member of the community is the member most capable of subordinating its individual interests to the interests of the community to which it belongs.

In this way the already composite units having united among themselves, the resulting communities continually expand and increase in complexity and coherence, while the nervous system in each contained individual as con-

tinually becomes more highly evolved, so as to serve the increasing demands of the more extensive and cohesive communities. There comes a point, however, in this process where unconscious instinct finds its bounds, for while communities of very various structure and extent are found below man, no community has arisen on progressive lines more inclusive than that which is formed of the more or less immediate descendants of common parents.

III

THE NATURE OF THE HUMAN UNIT

III

THE NATURE OF THE HUMAN UNIT

IN tracing the uprising of the main stem through the tree-like figure by which the development of life's forms is best pictured, we find that it rises always through those forms in which growth in size and complexity is attained to most effectually, and in which at the same time most scope is allowed for the attainment of further complexity and further growth. Every possible means of success has been put to proof, and branches have struck off from the main stem representing those forms which for the time being have succeeded in the struggle, but which have proved successful only by taking advantage of means which have impeded their further advance. These forms remain as blind alleys leading no whither. But meanwhile the main stem has grown on.

It has left behind from the beginning the great branch of the vegetable kingdom, without which the animal kingdom could not have come into being ; since animal life is incapable of adapting inorganic matter to the uses of its own nutrition. The nature of these vegetable forms

allowed no scope for the growth of a nervous system, and without a nervous system development on higher lines appears to have been impossible. It may have been that since the surface in plants is made use of for purposes of nutrition, its employment as a means of receiving and transmitting impressions from without was precluded. It is certain that the further complexity to be arrived at by the union of related units on progressive lines is not found in the vegetable kingdom. Deaf, dumb, blind, and without feeling for ever, these growths serve to bring the inorganic elements of nutrition into a condition which fits them to sustain the life of beings of higher possibilities—beings, moreover, free to roam in quest of food—and the main stem of progress rises through these other forms, which by a slower process arrive at more complex conditions.

In the main ascending line those forms are found in which the nervous system is best protected, and in which most scope is allowed for its further development, for the wider complexity which arises with the family and social instinct is accompanied always by considerable nervous development. But here again many forms which have achieved rapid success have been left behind in favour of those which, possibly less successful for the time being, have shown greater possibilities. Noticeably those insects are left behind whose social com-

munities remain to the wonder of man, for beside the limitation in size necessitated by the method of construction of their communities, the individuals composing them have moved on lines which have precluded the possibility of securing the enclosure of their nervous systems in a protecting case and leaving the rest of the organism free. The ancestors of the back-boned animals may have been passing a sluggish individual existence in their shallow waters while the ants and bees were maturing complex social systems, but it was through the slower growths, with their greater possibilities of nervous development, that the main line of progress lay.

Again, among the vertebrate forms, with their circumscribed allowance of limbs, the main stem in rising left behind as outlying branches all those forms which kept to water as a means of oxygenation, all those which, breathing in air, took air too as their main medium for movement, so limiting the possibilities of development in their fore limbs, which had to be especially adapted to the uses of flight. Again, all hoofed forms were left behind for a similar reason, and the main stem of progress remained with those forms, possibly less advanced for the time being, in which the tendency of development in the upper extremities left them free to arrive at functions other than locomotion. When an erect posture had been acquired,

and the fore limbs were at leisure to become specialised as servants to the demands of a more advanced nervous system, a new vista of possibility was made manifest, and all that is meant by the human race, all that is possible to man, began to dawn upon the future of this favoured species.

For it would seem, when the pictured tree reaches the point where the human race is represented, that the main direction of its growth is modified. It appears as if at this point one shoot struck out from the highest branch and grew to proportions which overshadow all the rest, since one species here gains an ascendancy no other can dispute. Man, as we see him now, has removed himself from competition with the forms of life which have preceded him,¹ and the main issue of the struggle has passed away from those other species, and has become centred within the limits of the ascendant species.

The method of his development, moreover, has undergone a change. For since throughout the animal kingdom new life arises only out of the elements of old life, animal or vegetable, below man, the necessities of existence demand that each individual, impelled by its desire to live and grow, shall find some other forms to feed on, and shall at the same time

¹ Except, perhaps, from those forms which by their invisibility still outwit his vigilance and invade his organism.

find means of escape, as long as may be, from being fed on by yet other forms. The issue of this stress and struggle to feed, and to escape being fed on—whether pursued by an individual or by a community—being the expression of an ever-increasing size and complexity in the forms which best succeed. The development which inevitably ensues is arrived at only through the unconscious agency of instincts which are making for other ends.

But with man these conditions have gradually been modified. While all other species are engaged in the constant struggle to secure food, and to escape those that would feed on them, man has found the means of bringing the forms he needs into his service, and of removing those other forms which would assail him in their turn. He preserves those he would from the struggle to seek food and to escape their devourers that they may be ready to his hand when his need arises ; the rest he has ousted from the regions where he congregates. Man alone is thus driven to the necessity of burying his dead, and although even in the grave the hurrying crowds of life find him out, it is, as it were, by his own invitation that they are permitted to operate.

Moreover, the nature of the struggle itself has undergone a change as well as the ground whereon the strife is being waged. The individual human being can no longer be said to

strive for existence, since in the more advanced civilisations the State takes his life in hand and sees to it that he does not die of want or injury ; the State provides him with food in his last extremity, and the State safeguards him against hurt at the hand of his brother man. The aim of the individual is therefore modified ; it is no longer for existence that he strives, but for better conditions of existence during his term of life.

Man, as an individual, has not only escaped therefore from the stress of struggle and competition with all earlier forms of life—the struggle in which those earlier forms are still engaged, and by means of which he himself has been evolved—but he has placed himself, as an individual, on a new footing with regard to the nature of the strife itself.

Nevertheless, it is very evident that his development has not ceased with his escape from the process which has shaped him. His ascendancy is still maintained, his possibilities are becoming always more apparent and of widening scope.

What, then, is the secret of his progress ? What is the new feature which has given so great an impetus to his development that his pre-eminence among all other forms is thus assured and is thus being continually advanced ?

Is not the answer to this question to be found in the fact that man has gained the power of

uniting into larger and more complex units than any of the forms of life which have gone before, and that, by perpetually increasing in cohesion and extent, these human communities have reached such vast proportions that they have passed the point when any other of life's individuals or communities can attempt to compete with them, until at last the main issue of the struggle has passed away from all other species, and has become centred among the different communities, which on this view are the individuals of the ascendant species ?

And is not the new feature which has given this impulse to his progress the development of an abstract consciousness, which has come into existence with the greater development of his nervous system ? A consciousness which has revealed to him, dimly at first, but with growing clearness, the existence of forces which play about his being, forces which he can neither resist nor control ; laws which he must either obey, or not obeying, suffer the penalties of disobedience ? A consciousness which has made him realise his inherited instinct of single-self-seeking as an instinct, which he must subordinate to the larger family instinct, and again to the wider tribal and national claims, and again to the claims of the whole human race ? A consciousness which has made him resist his instinct of narrow self-insistence as an enemy to all that he can discern of law, of the

universe, of God ? Like a child awakening, the human race rubbed its eyes, and looking, began to understand the vast realities which throng round its existence, began to realise the need of its own voluntary co-operation in the fulfilment of the laws by which development is being achieved.

At the time when the new light was turned on primitive instinct, and man learnt the need of himself endeavouring to restrain it in the service of a higher obedience, he had eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil—he became a living Soul. He was brought into touch with those eternal laws which operate from beyond this world, and which include the whole universe in their working ; he began to apprehend the existence of a Source of infinite purpose, of whose attributes his perceptions still remain only nascent, but which his mind is endeavouring continually to grasp. Consciousness has revealed to him the vast region of the Unknown, and, in spite of all his progress, on its threshold he still remains in reverent amazement.

With this new attitude towards the hidden purposes of creation as revealed by law development began to pass from that early phase in which it was the inevitable outcome of instincts which made for other ends, and it entered on the present later phase of accelerated movement, the phase in which gradually human instinct is

being made to trend voluntarily in the direction of eternal law, in which man has begun consciously to fulfil that which he can grasp of its demands. As to the attributes of the Source of all law and the penalties incurred by disobedience, man's apprehension was at first as crude as his powers of thought were immature, but he has never failed to associate his obedience to the acquired instinct of individual subordination to the larger good, with his sense of thus consciously submitting to the controlling force which shapes the issues of his life.

In that first dim twilight of the mind, when the family or the tribe was the unit of strife, the need of protecting the life of individuals within the unit for the larger unit's good became manifest. The human law against murder within the family—that most primitive law stereotyped for ever in the story of Cain and Abel—was gradually enforced, with the consciousness that it contained within it the reflection of an eternal truth of life, the triumph of a greater over a lesser instinct, a law sanctioned by all that man was able to conceive of as God. So also other laws tending to subdue antagonism within the family or the tribe, and so to secure its cohesion in competition with other tribes, were gradually brought into action ; laws relating to his attitude towards his fellows, to possessions which the individual made his own by common consent, rules for regulating the observances by which

the Power or Powers which were discerned as controlling human well-being should be worshipped or propitiated. The laws made by man from the most primitive times seem to have represented those fractions of ultimate truth which the farthest-seeing of the different units could grasp and bring to bear upon the people. And as a parent, to protect his child from the disastrous results of actions the issues of which he, though not the child, is able to foresee, will make rules and enforce lesser punishments to act as deterrents till the greater results can be discerned by the child itself, so those who had been specialised as leaders of the different units enforced obedience to their human laws by lesser penalties, to the end that the individual might be deterred from action the evil issues of which to the unit, he, though not the perpetrator, might be able to grasp and understand. The Ten Commandments represent the laws which met the needs of the most religious and the most cohesive of all tribes, the one tribe which has been able to survive and partake, as a tribe, of the civilisation of the larger communities which eventually superseded those bounded by tribal limitations.

For when the tribes were enabled to hold their offspring, which were about to separate off, in the bonds of a common interest with themselves, and when these larger units appropriated certain tracts of earth to their own

uses, the national unit came into existence, and gradually the main line of progress passed away from the lesser communities of tribe and became centred among the larger and more diversified units of nation. Among the foremost people of the earth at the present time, on this assumption, it is the nation which is the unit in the struggle for existence ; the nation is the individual which fights for life, which, when its interests are opposed to those of other nations, is compelled, if possible, to kill the weaker, to outwit the stronger. The individuals within this larger organism are protected as carefully as the cells within any animal organism are protected in the interest of the organism itself ; those individuals set apart for the office of protection and aggression—the armies and navies of nations, like the teeth and claws and hide of the carnivora—leaving other individuals free to become specialised in the service of the system's other needs. As in the animal organism the supply of nourishment to the cells of which it is composed is conveyed by a system differentiated for that purpose, while the organism as a whole is employed in securing other organisms as food, that the system itself may be supplied and the necessary business of existence and of growth proceed, so with the organism of the human community. The supply of nourishment to the individuals of which it is composed is maintained by manufacture,

agriculture, commerce, and trade manipulated by individuals differentiated for those purposes, while the community as a whole is employed in securing and holding the means by which the supply is guaranteed. The development of mind, and of the activities born of mind, has necessarily introduced a great diversity of need into these communities, and many sources of supply and varieties of trade are required to meet these needs.

Like the cells in the animal organism, the individuals in the human community are engaged in the struggle to obtain each its share of the supply; but the struggle is on different lines to the primal strife for existence, since it is to the ultimate interest of the parts that the need of all should be supplied, as it is the business of certain parts to see that certain others do not lack. It is the business meanwhile of the community as a whole to exist and grow, and to escape being merged in the existence of other communities, to which end its defences are maintained, and its armies and navies are equipped through the agency of the governing system, while the governing eye keeps a vigilant and wary outlook on competing communities. And, as in the strife of animal organisms, the victor devours its victim, which becomes part of its very substance, in a similar way with the strife of communities, the victorious community absorbs into itself

those, or portions of those, which it is able to conquer, and they become part of the very structure of its own organisation.

Moreover, with the nations themselves at the present time a process of growth is taking place similar to that which obtained with the cells and larger individuals and families and tribes which have gradually been built up into the existing units of nations. For the nation which overgrows the regions at its command sends offshoots into the less peopled lands, where the means of subsistence are still unappropriated, or made use of by tribes which are quickly overborne. And as with the earlier organisms, intolerance at first arose among these separated units, but gradually a more successful issue was arrived at, when the parent organism was able to hold its offspring to itself in the bonds of a common interest, and parent and offspring at length became one composite unit ; so this still larger ideal is beginning to dawn upon the nations of the world, and the greater imperial possibilities are coming into view.

For while the units of intolerance have been consolidating themselves in obedience to laws which they have already made their own, wider laws have always been rising above the horizon, to which, in their turn, the progressive units have learnt to expand their ideals. Thus while at the present time the national ideal is the unit of greatest tolerance, and the imperial ideal

is being faced, there lies still on the horizon, to be perceived across the boundaries of the lesser limitations which still constrain mankind, the great ultimate possibility of the universal brotherhood of surviving man.

IV

THE STRUCTURE OF COMMUNITIES

IV

THE STRUCTURE OF COMMUNITIES

A GREAT diversity of method is found to exist in the formation of the larger composite units out of individuals of simpler make ; but throughout all communities, from the simplest to the most highly complex, definite lines of development appear to run round which the different forms are grouped. A certain similarity of method reappears again and again, first in the communities of cells which result in vegetable then in animal organisms ; again among the communities into which the more complex organisms unite themselves below man ; and again among the communities of men, which, on this assumption, are the only true individuals of the human race. The actual physical affinity which limits growth becomes less and less essential as a binding agency, but other affinities are matured which in action become equally binding, while they permit the organism to grow and again to increase in capacity for further growth. In human communities it is in the nature of these affinities that the different methods of growth are manifested.

The earliest and simplest lines on which communities are formed lie through those loose aggregates of individuals which achieve rapid growth while differentiation of the component parts is scarcely attempted. Size is thus quickly attained to in the composite individual but at the expense of cohesive power within the mass, and disintegration can be brought about as easily as growth. The advance made in this way fails in one element essential to success on progressive lines since, although the instinct to grow is obeyed, the need of securing the continued existence of the larger individual is not taken into account.

The second plan works on lines diametrically opposed to the first, for with organisms held together by this method greater cohesion of the composite individual is secured at the expense of the possibility of further expansion. Especial stress is laid in these forms on defence and the protection of the individual under attack, and growth is of necessity hampered by the cumbrous machinery necessary to protection.

The third and more successful method, that through which the main line of progress and development is always seen to run, strikes the mean between the two necessities of continued existence on the part of the composite individual in the form already attained to, and its capacity for further growth, determined by the methods through which cohesion is secured.

The need of protection and the defence of the individual is made subordinate to the need of freedom and the power to expand. This process is more deliberate in its working, and it may be that favourable conditions of isolation and natural protection are essential to its furtherance, but, assuming development to be the object of life, it is the only sure process.

There is no definite line of demarcation between these different methods, they appear to merge one into the other, but at the extremes of the two first the strength and weakness of the different modes of growth become very obvious, as well as the need of a mean being struck between them in order that development may proceed.

These three methods are found to exist in the vegetable kingdom, and the greatest ultimate success is achieved, here as elsewhere, by those organisms in which the third method obtains ; but progress is arrested even in the highest of these forms by the exclusion of a nervous system from the vegetative scheme of life. The composite unit may attain to considerable size, but the further union of these composite units is precluded where there are no special organs of control, where there is no sensitive surface, to receive and transmit impressions from without.

The colonies of bacteria, many water-plants, and all fungoid growths which uprise and flourish, and decay with so great rapidity, may be

taken to represent the first method. Differentiation of function remains at a minimum in these forms, and disintegration of the individual is easily accomplished. Rapid growth is achieved at the expense of the power of maintaining the size which has been attained.

The second method is found among the monocotyledonous plants in which the functions are more highly specialised, but in which no provision is made for the further growth in circumference of the stem when once the cells composing it have attained their full size, and in which there is a hardening of the outside of the stem to form a protective covering which impedes further increase in circumference. Organisms formed on these lines may attain to a considerable size, as do the palms under tropical conditions ; but the greater number remain of lesser bulk, since they are unable by their structure to develop stems of increasing girth to support the growing superstructure.

The third and most successful method is carried out by the dicotyledons, in which provision is made for the reproduction of tissue from within, accompanied by the possibility of a continuous expansion in the outer layers. There being, however, no true nervous system in these organisms, the development consequent on the further union of composite units has no province in the vegetable kingdom.

Turning next to the animal kingdom, we find

that the first plan is apparently followed by all those invertebrate forms in which differentiation of function is of so little account that the composite individuals may divide into two parts or more, and each part remain capable of reproducing the missing part or the entire organism. It is difficult indeed with some of these forms to decide the exact boundary between the individual and the community, so capable are the parts of existing separately or united into a larger organism.

The second plan is followed by those invertebrate organisms which protect themselves in a horny or calcareous case, so furthering the existence of the individual in the form attained to, but limiting its capacity for further development ; such are all crustaceans and insects, and many molluscs. In these the nervous system gains touch with the outer world, through complicated organs of sight, hearing, and feeling ; but feeling, as with the other senses, is limited to certain organs differentiated for that purpose, the rest of the body being incapacitated by its protective covering from receiving impressions from without. The existence of the individual is efficiently secured ; but growth and development on the higher and freer vertebrate lines is rendered impossible under these conditions.

The third method is followed by those vertebrate forms which confine the hard protective covering to the delicate central nervous system,

and leave the rest of the organism free to grow and expand, and to increase in sensitiveness to impressions from without. Far greater scope for the development of the nervous system is permitted on this method, and it is through the agencies brought into play by its development that the formation of the still larger and more complex units becomes possible. And although with vertebrate organisms the tendency to revert to the protective method asserts itself from time to time, the organisms so protected are never found among those on the main line of advance. They may exist the better as individuals, but they cannot progress.

When now we shift our ground and consider the communities into which these composite individuals unite below man, we find similar differences in the mode of their formation, though the binding agency ceases to be physical. The loosely formed units in which the parts are but slightly, if at all, specialised are represented by the swarms of insects which congregate and move in groups, also by the shoals of herring, mackerel, and other fishes, by which the sea is sometimes crowded over an expanse of several miles. These communities appear to owe their origin to the propinquity of the innumerable progeny of any given pair or pairs on emerging from the egg. A common interest in holding together appears to determine the existence of these as of all communities, but no centralisa-

tion of control, no sufficient differentiation of function exists in these to secure permanence of union beyond one generation, or any further extension of the community. They achieve considerable size, but by a process which leaves them so incoherent that their disintegration can be brought about as rapidly as their formation.

The second plan on which further growth of the community is impeded by the very conditions which render the unit compact, is represented by the communities of the higher insects. The method of growth in these communities resembles that by which the communities of cells were consolidated. For with bees and ants certain specialised members are told off to secure and convey nourishment to the unit, and others to protect it from attack; while members corresponding to the cells of growth are set apart for the work of reproduction, from which the other members are relieved. When further growth is necessitated, these reproductive members are started off to form new communities by reproducing not only their kind, but industrial members of the community as well. By this method of growth the limits of the community are of necessity circumscribed by the reproductive power of the queen. A bond practically physical in nature is thus introduced, since the component parts of the whole unit are throughout life interdependent on each other. The formation of larger units depending for their

peopling on more than one queen seems to have been ruled out of court by the inherited and insuperable hostility of each swarm towards the members of all other swarms.¹ Possibly the nervous system, in these forms, highly evolved as it is, here reaches the limit of its power of development on the given conditions of protection on which it works.

The last, and only, method on which communities can grow progressively is found in embryo among all pairs of animals which devote personal care to their young and, during the period of their immaturity, subordinate the individual to the family instinct.² The development of the nervous system in the vertebrate forms being a lengthy process, the need of protecting the young individuals till the process of formation is achieved becomes increasingly essential. And since individuals possessing parents capable of affording such protection would best arrive at maturity, those arriving at maturity and the power of carrying on the race would be those inheriting such capacity to protect, in turn, their own offspring. Temporary units are thus formed which are of great cohesive strength, and when, as this period of protecting care becomes more and more prolonged, a moment is at last arrived at in which

¹ See Lubbock's "Ants, Bees, and Wasps," p. 119.

² See "The Origin and Growth of the Moral Instinct," by Alexander Sutherland.

the holding together of the family not only survives the period of immaturity, but endures through life, these family units remain as centres of strength within the larger unit and help to bind together the larger units of tribe which grow out of the family unit. Such larger units are found among those birds and quadrupeds which group themselves into flocks and herds, and several generations may be included in one unit. Differentiation of function in these communities, though greatly in advance of that which is found in the communities of fishes, is apparently less advanced than that attained to by the more physically coherent insect communities ; but by distributing the work of reproduction among all the members, and thus ensuring growth from many centres, the possibility of the further expansion of such communities is vastly increased.

It is only, however, with the human race that the further formation of communities has assumed a continuously growing and highly differentiated form. Many birds and many quadrupeds continue to live independent lives, the temporary family units being the limit of their power of combination. But the existence of any human individual who does not, throughout life, form the component part of a larger unit, is practically unknown. The physical provision for the growth of communities remains with man as it exists in the highest forms below

man, but the new medium by means of which further growth is achieved—the development of consciousness and the dim apprehension by its means of a universal law which man turns with increasing knowledge on to the growth of the human unit of strife—uplifts the whole process to a higher plane. With man, not only has the community become consolidated as the unit in the struggle to exist, but with the more advanced races these communities themselves are composite, their component parts consisting of lesser communities held together by bonds as effectual as those which held together the primitive cell units into one individual, the primitive composite individuals into units of family or tribe. The old methods of unconscious growth in these complex communities are no longer the only methods ; they play their part in determining the issues of conflict between these larger units ; but it is a subordinate part. The main factor in human development, a factor whose dominion is always gaining ground, is the new and more elastic medium through which the development of man is achieved :—the medium of sympathy induced by the working of mind on instinct. By this agency man has not only been brought into touch with the infinite Source of all law, and with the demands made by law on human conduct, but from the moment of his primal apprehension of that force he has been constrained consciously to modify the demands

of instinct in conformity to its requirements; while those units of which the individuals best modified their instincts of self-seeking have been the units which have best succeeded. New bonds of union between man and man have been created by this necessity for cohesion within the narrow limits of existing units however small, and sympathy—equivalent of the connective tissue of physically united communities—has come into play. Common aims, common fears, quickened the sense of comradeship, and tended to subdue the purely self-seeking instincts of individuals gradually being incapacitated from isolated action, even though the sense of sympathy, as with the sense of the demands of law, was in early times as crude as man's mind was immature—is still as crude as man's mind is still immature.

But in the development of these human communities under the influence on conduct of an apprehension of law, we find the same tendencies at work as in the formation and development of all other composite units which have come into being, even though the medium through which they operate is changed. With the introduction of this new medium of mind bringing consciousness of law, a new function was necessitated, and certain individuals of the community were specialised to exercise this function. The mind and consciousness of the many needed guidance and control, as the

members of the animal body need the control of the nervous system ; and as the component individuals became themselves more highly specialised for their several functions, they were compelled to leave the function of apprehending law and turning it to account in the hands of the few members who became their leaders and their religious teachers, both functions in the earlier communities having been frequently united under one head.

It has been through the different methods adopted by the leaders in exercising their function of moral control that the different plans of growth and development have been exemplified. The affinity between the component parts of the unit being no longer physical in nature, the control of the related parts passes also out of the physical stage, but this function of control is very differently exercised. Two of the three methods which have been traced through the formation of vegetable and animal organisms are very clearly to be discerned in the formation of human communities, although the first method, that of securing rapid growth at the expense of coherence, may not find any living representatives. It is possible that some savage races may survive whose cohesion is thus loosely compact, but it seems more probable that, if they have existed, they have already given place to tribes more cohesive in structure, as these in their turn are yielding to

the advance of the larger and more composite national units.

The second method, that by which the parts are so compactly bound together that further growth in size of the unit is precluded, is to be seen wherever despotisms exist, whether in the family, the tribal, or the national unit. The despot maintains belief in, and obedience to, himself by restraining the development of the individuals he controls ; he thus secures great cohesion in the unit over which he holds sway, since the wills of the people lie, as it were, in his own hands ; while they, conscious of their incompetence to act without his guidance, are willing to yield obedience to the force by means of which they prosper. It being to the leader's interest, and, as he believes, to the interest of the unit, to subdue independence of thought or action which might disintegrate the unit, other centres of strength are not permitted ; the cohesion is, as it were, produced by bonds converging from the people to the leader, while everything interfering with that free convergence is deprecated. It is evident that possibilities of further expansion of the unit must be curtailed on these lines, in much the same way that the further expansion of the higher insect communities is curtailed, since leader and people being interdependent for existence on each other, growth beyond the point at which the mass can be wielded from one centre is pre-

cluded. If another leader arises who cannot be subdued continued cohesion becomes impossible, one or other leader must break off from the existing community, and with those members who will accept his rule must commence a new community, antagonistic to the first under stress of competition when once separation has finally taken place and the common interest is at an end. Provision is made for one obedient people under sway of one leader ; if another leader arises cleavage of the unit must ensue, since in consequence of its method of growth more than one centre of thought or rule cannot exist in a community formed on despotic lines. In much the same way no higher insect community can exist in which there is more than one mature queen. Beyond a certain point, therefore, the growth from within of such communities is precluded by the nature of their method of growth ; the holding together of the parent community and its offspring, on grounds of a community of interest, being rendered impossible after separation by the innate hostility generated between the separated parts themselves.

But a despotism may nevertheless grow and increase to considerable proportions on lines of conquest and forceful subjugation of other communities. The leader in these cases maintains his supremacy and compels obedience to his rule, holding the parts together by the same despotic means as those by which the original

community is coerced. But the cohesion attained to in this way between conquering and conquered peoples, is different in kind and degree to that which arises between related parts held together by the sense of a common origin and a common interest. A despotic unit, however large, contains within itself elements of disintegration which weaken its resisting power under the impact of even smaller units matured on more progressive lines.

Success, for the time being, of the individual is usually the outcome of this second mode of growth, but it is temporary success at the expense of further possibilities. Those communities which take advantage of this method and are unable to escape from its limitations are found to have removed themselves from the main line of advance, they have secured individual existence under stress of competition to the exclusion of the power to grow on lines which secure the highest possibilities of growth.

In a constitutional or republican mode of government, on the other hand—that which represents the third method of construction in human units—the leader or leaders in different degrees aim at securing self-government of the component parts in deference to the needs of the whole unit. Secondary centres of strength are permitted which among themselves produce interlacing strands of sympathy and consequent cohesion ; instead of being ousted from the

community they remain to strengthen it. The development of the mind of the people becomes an essential aim, instead of constituting an element of adverse strength to be kept in abeyance. Growth of the individual community is able to proceed when the structure is built on these lines. There remains a central source of moral control, but the parts themselves take their share in contributing to the number of those who exercise this function. Cohesion is thus achieved not only by bonds of interdependence between the rulers and the ruled, but by interlacing strands of sympathy born of a community of common interest which emanate from many centres. A structure of this kind may obviously be of considerable resisting power, and yet remain capable of further expansion. Those competing leaders who arise are used in contributing to the strength of the central controlling force, or in their own province remain to exercise lesser functions of control. A primary connection exists between the main centre of government and these lesser centres, while all other connective agencies between the component parts are allowed full play.

It has been on these lines that all the more advanced communities have moved and still are moving. Most of the European peoples were compelled to adopt despotic methods through the exigencies of the acute competition which their position forced upon them at the breaking up

of the Roman Empire. But an older and freer spirit has remained, and it is gradually breaking down the restraints of government by coercion, while those despots which are incapable of yielding to the pressure from within of their more enlightened peoples suffer as all organisms suffer which revert or adhere to the protective mode of existence and advance.

Whether this view of human development be accepted or not, it must be allowed that the position of individual man has undergone a vital change since the earliest dawn of consciousness within him. He began free to follow his own instincts, but with the passing of the ages he has disowned this freedom, and the security of his bondage increases as he rises in the scale. The coercion exercised by the few over the many, the strong over the weak, is losing force at every turn, with the increase in number of those permitted to be strong; but this freedom from coercive control is acquired only in proportion as a more forceful bondage comes into play, a bondage from within, which constrains the individual's deeds and holds even his thoughts in thrall. The despotic method can be effectively relinquished only as the individual constituents of a community acquire the power of governing themselves, as they themselves forge the links which bind them to their fellows, and compel them to find their own good only in that which profits also those to

whom they are bound. By means of the invisible strands of sympathy which entwine around and control man as he thinks and moves, the interests of each individual are becoming inextricably united to those of his family, his social, his national interests ; he is becoming incapable of action which does not regard those interests in different degrees, each component part of the community being converted, in this way, into a centre of cohesive strength. Those individuals who have the misfortune to be behindhand among their fellows in realising the community of interest and in developing the bonds of sympathy, find that the compelling force of human opinion to a considerable extent controls and circumscribes their actions, while those whom neither sympathy nor social opinion can restrain, find themselves face to face with their country's law, which with an iron hand forbids them to follow their individual instincts uncontrolled.

But while the primal instincts of the individual within the community are thus held captive, the primal instincts of the community itself remain free and unconstrained. The nation is still compelled to demand the needs of its own existence and its growth ; and an instinct of antagonism towards all competing communities which are making the same demands remains an essential condition of survival and development. Under stress of conflict

both sympathy within the unit and antagonism towards those without are accentuated. Strife electrifies, as it were, the sense of community of interest, and without its agency such cohesion as exists could never have been secured.

The actions of individual man being thus inextricably bound up with the actions of lesser units within a larger unit, which in its turn has to struggle for existence with other similar units, it seems difficult to escape the conclusion that these larger communities are now the individuals which constitute the units of strife ; and that each human being within the unit is merely a component part in the act of achieving the self-subservience which is essential to the existence of the unit as a whole.

V

THE BINDING FORCE IN HUMAN
COMMUNITIES

V

THE BINDING FORCE IN HUMAN COMMUNITIES

IF it be granted that growth which is arrived at through an increase in complexity of structure in the unit of strife, together with a faculty for further increase, is the essential element in all progress ; and if it be granted, moreover, that the advance made by man which removes him from strife with all other species is due to his conscious, though immature, recognition of, and attempt at co-operation in this law, then it must follow that those communities which recognise it most clearly and co-operate most effectually, must be the units which best succeed.

But this wider law, which embraces the interests of the family and the community and works from those standpoints, is directly opposed to the inherited instinct of narrow self-seeking and intolerance which has been essential to the existence of the individual in all the advancing stages of life's progress, and which still survives in each member of the human as of all other species. As the primitive cell, constrained by the need to exist as an individual,

was at first intolerant of all other cells opposed to its own interests, even of the cell which a moment before had formed part of its own substance, so each of the composite units which have been built up through the acquired need of co-operation between certain related cells is intolerant by instinct of all other such composite individuals whose interests compete with its own ; so each community of such composite individuals is intolerant by instinct of all other such competing communities. And although in the species below man this instinct of individual intolerance has, in its turn, already been modified in their communities, and with man himself is in process of being broken down far more effectually, the process even with the human race is still in an early stage. The subjection of the cell to the interests of the larger organism in the animal body may be said to have been already established ;¹ but the subordination of the individual human being to the good of the communities to which he belongs is still in a period of transition. Man finds himself consciously at enmity with an inherited instinct within himself, which perpetually prompts him to seek the needs of his own existence only, regardless of the fact that

¹ Unless certain morbid growths of tissue may be taken as evidence of independent action on the part of cells insufficiently brought into subjection to the welfare of the unit of which they form a part.

as member of a community, or of communities, his own existence can only profit as he seeks the welfare of those larger communities themselves. He is not yet emancipated from the demands of the old conditions although he already suffers from the penalties of disobedience to the new.

For if it is essential to a successful unit that it should continually increase in complexity and extent, then only those component parts which contribute to the cohesion and growth of the unit can directly benefit the unit, and so, indirectly, benefit themselves. The whole can succeed only as the parts subordinate their individual interests to the interest of the whole. And the parts can succeed only as the whole succeeds.

In the forms of life which have preceded man this subservience of the parts has been wrought out slowly and unconsciously by means of inexorable law working through the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence, the fittest unit, at all times, being the most cohesive and extensive unit ; and with man the same law is still working on the same lines to produce communities of individuals of more involved and complicated type. But with man—it is the endeavour of these pages to maintain—the process is accelerated, and a higher development is made possible by an appreciation of, and co-operation with law on the part of the component parts themselves.

The new force thus initiated has shifted the issues of development, and has separated off the human from all other species, in which the power of conscious obedience to law has not been attained to. With man, development has thus passed from the purely physical phase to one in which moral cohesion is the triumphant factor. But the development of this new force, which came into play with the birth of consciousness of law, introduced, as has been said, the necessity for a new function in human communities. As at the dividing line between vegetable and animal life provision was made in the latter for the new function which developed in the higher forms into a complicated nervous system, a system controlling the whole organism and bringing the individual into touch, through its senses, with the world about it ; so it would seem that at the dividing line between pre-human and human communities provision was made in the latter for the new function which has developed into a complicated system of moral coercion which controls the larger organism, and brings the individuals composing these human communities into touch with universal law. For in these larger units, consisting of tribe or nation, the specialisation of the different members for their several functions has left only the few free to apprehend the demands of law and to bring it to bear on securing cohesion of the community.

The greater number have had to be content at all times that their higher thinking should be done vicariously. While some have been engaged in securing the nutrition of the community, some in tending the young in their helpless stage, some in defending the unit and increasing its bounds, others have been specialised to apprehend the laws which control all life, or to administer the law which has been apprehended that it may conduce to the community's cohesion and its growth.

It has been as if each community, while engaged in struggling through life's difficult ways, had had to trust for guidance to those travellers who, swifter of foot and of keener vision than their fellows, have climbed to some higher standpoint from whence a larger prospect has opened on the view, disclosing wider horizons on beyond. These Seers have peered through the mist to see the lie of country and the distant goal, and seeing, they have pointed out the way to those below. But the obvious and easy way dictated by the single-self-seeking instinct has never been the right way to travel in, and the Seers have been hard pressed to make clear to the multitude the need of turning their steps in the more difficult direction of acting for the benefit, not of self only, but of the whole community, which from their heights they have seen to be the only way. The religious teachers of the world have been compelled to find means

by which to convey the ideal which is still out of sight to their hearers ; to find motives by which to urge on their difficult way those whose vision is still curtailed by the nearer features of the country-side ; the vision of the Seers having been in turn curtailed by the farthest horizon which their heights revealed. The presence of an irresistible Force demanding the restraint of self-seeking for the purposes of union into small units, albeit with little tolerance for other units, was the prospect which disclosed itself to the Seers in the earlier part of the journey ; a wider need of self-restraint and an increase in sympathy and tolerance which should permit the growth of larger and still larger units, till the unity of the whole human race should eventually become a reality, was the prospect which disclosed itself at a later time.

This new function of guiding the consciousness of the community, like all other functions, has tended always towards further differentiation. From almost imperceptible beginnings, a religious system apprehending law and a system of government administering it have grown up side by side. And as communities have advanced a deposit of human law, modelled on those fractions of universal law which the development of the time has brought within reach of man's apprehension, has been left behind with the shifting and renewing of the generations. The main tendency of human law

has been at all times to restrain self-seeking among the members of a community, and thus to secure cohesion, so that in competition with other communities it may have resisting or aggressive power. But in progressive communities the standard of self-restraint set by the religious system has always been in advance of that demanded by the law of the State ; and the records of history seem to show that where the religious ideal has ceased to advance the progress of the unit has begun to be arrested.

Moreover, in human communities the need of a force capable of restraining instinct becomes imperative to an increasing degree. For the birth of that same consciousness which awoke man's soul and brought him into touch with Eternal Law, so immeasurably furthering his possibilities and singling him out for pre-eminence among all other forms of life, awakened, at the same time, his perceptions to the possibility of ministering abnormally to his instincts ; consciousness, which produces obedience to law, and so welds together the communities of men, promotes in its turn a disease which may undermine those communities and endanger their very existence.

The instinct of self-preservation or of existence, and the instinct of race preservation or growth, the two instincts which dominate life throughout, when unconcerned with mind,

work simply and sanely to their ends ; but when thought is turned upon them they become distorted and intensified. Instincts which, when obeyed without consciousness, secure the end at which they aim, become exaggerated by mind, and their elaboration works injury alike on their possessor and those about him. The instincts of self-importance and self-gratification feed and fatten on thought and grow to hideous proportions. Cruelties and lusts come into being which, with agile minds to conceive them and sensitive minds to suffer them, degrade man far below the level from which he began his upward course, and compel the imagination to conceive of hells, peopled by similar degraded beings, where punishments suitable to such offences may hereafter be enforced.

Moreover, apart from these extremes, the evil influence of mind on conduct is everywhere perceptible. Consciousness introduces a new medium in which self-interest can work and calls into existence all the evils which lie in thought beyond those evils which lie in action ; while among those who are endeavouring after self-restraint, others who are elaborating and accentuating self-interest can make the better way. Cunning, deceit, falsehood arise out of the action of mind on self-interest, and for the moment may win their ends. Anger, the antagonism of mind, gains the vehicle of words wherewith to wound and

injure, and in the hands of the more forceful can work great havoc, driving the weaker to practise the methods of lying, hypocrisy, and feigned subservience. The exaggeration of the individual instinct causes self to swell in its own estimation and to demand the same exaggerated estimate from others. Hence pride, conceit, self - satisfaction, self - opinionatedness, overflowing towards those around in the form of scorn, contempt, presumption, oppression, cruelty. The exaggeration of the instinct of growth draws a veil of uncleanness across the mental vision, and while it enervates the mind corrupts the individual's outlook on the world.

With beings, therefore, who are endowed with mind and consciousness, the functions of control are extended to embrace a larger need, for they have to hold in check not only the normal manifestations of instinct, but also those abnormal manifestations which are fostered by the action of consciousness.

If, therefore, it be granted that an increase in the size and cohesion of the different communities is essential to human progress, and if man, together with all that lives, is possessed by an instinct or instincts deterrent to cohesion, instincts, moreover, which consciousness magnifies and reinforces, then it must follow that those communities provided for the time being with motives which are most effectual in securing the restraint of instinct

and its deflection into wider channels must be the communities which are best fitted to succeed.

In his "History of European Morals"¹ Mr. Lecky has shown that there have been two main motives which have been made use of at different times and under different forms to deter from vice or to assist moral endeavour.

The first of these motives assumes that the good of the individual is the one and sufficient aim of man, and showing that a due regard to the good of others is essential to the welfare of each individual, it urges that an enlightened selfishness, acting on this necessity, is a sufficient incentive to virtue, and it claims that no further motive is needed, or could indeed be effectual. Man's selfishness is to make him unselfish ; his own interests are to make him good. This motive is the groundwork of the Philosophy of the Epicurean and Utilitarian Schools.

The second motive takes a wider range. It assumes that right action has an intrinsic value apart from the gratification it may produce to the individual, and it urges man to seek the good of others because a Higher Power which he can neither control nor gainsay demands it of him. Man's higher sense is to make him unselfish ; his belief in a Power beyond himself which demands goodness is to make him good.

¹ Chap. i. pp. 5, 69, 70.

On this motive the Stoical and Intuitive Schools, including all religious systems, take their stand.

There can be no doubt that in employing the individual instinct as an agency in securing consideration for others the Utilitarian Schools avail themselves of a motive force which is powerful and effective when once it can be shown, as it can be shown, that consideration for the welfare of others is conducive to the welfare of the individual himself. Its agency is direct, no lesser inducements are needed to link it on to higher issues, since higher issues are not involved. And there can be no doubt that self-interest so enlightened lies at the root of right action throughout life with many, and that it operates at times with all. But the Utilitarian assumption that the good of the individual is the one and sufficient aim of man seems to be disproved by human history. History shows that again and again the individual human being has been content to sacrifice his well-being and his life when by such sacrifice others might be profited, whereas self-interest of the widest kind can only carry a man as far as the conception of self-restraint in the interest of others. If, moreover, as on the view here maintained, the community, and not the individual human being, is the unit in the human struggle to exist, it would seem impossible that the Utilitarian motive acting alone should be sufficient to account for the cohesion and growth

which have been achieved by the human unit. By the individual motive, action is made to centre in each component part of the unit, the individual is held a voluntary prisoner to self, whereas on this view it has been essential to the growth of communities that the centre of individual action should be shifted from time to time to the centre of the larger community, from whence the welfare of the whole community has been embraced in aim, and under such necessity the individual has had constantly to aim at action only indirectly, if at all, beneficial to himself, at action which at times has included self-renunciation and self-sacrifice in its demands.

Even in the species below man an instinct which goes beyond the self-interest of the individual is unconsciously obeyed, as, for instance, when the mother-bird decoys the destroyer from her nest at the risk of her own life. For the time being the individual instinct of the mother-bird is merged in the instinct to secure the existence of the family ; those families in which the mother-bird best subordinates the individual to the family interest during the nesting season being the families which best survive, even though the individual life of the mother-bird be sacrificed in the family interest. It is such an instinct which goes beyond self-interest, and which, with man, is capable of being fostered and reinforced by consciousness,

that man obeys when he sacrifices his life, or individual welfare, to his family, tribal, or national needs. Those human communities in which the wider interests are most effectually fostered and strengthened being the communities which best survive in strife with other communities.

A community, therefore, in which even disinterested action centres in the subsequent gain to the individual must inevitably be less cohesive, and so less capable of existing in strife with other communities, than one in which each component part shifts the centre of its action towards the centre of the larger community itself. And a community possessed of a motive force which brings itself to rest in any existing unit, and is not capable of projecting itself towards the centre of larger units yet to be attained, must fail in achieving further growth essential to further progress.

But beyond the inability of the Utilitarian motive working alone to account for the higher limits of human attainment, it would seem again that unless reinforced from some other source it must, by its very method of action, tend to neutralise its own efficiency. It would seem inevitable that by the employment of the individual instinct as an agent in modifying its own action, its own action must in time become weakened in the process ; that by continually making use of self-interest as a motive force in inducing consideration for the interests of others,

self-interest must in time lose some of its insistence. If others have to be considered, self can only take its share in the amount of consideration shown, and if self only has a share in the amount of its own consideration, the force of its own self-insistence must be lessened. Thus, while the finding of self's benefit through disregard of self may be a matter of daily experience, the seeking of self's benefit through disregard of self must, it would seem, tend eventually to defeat its own ends.

If, therefore, it be granted that the enlightened individual instinct, while it will account for self-restraint, will not account for self-sacrifice, if although it might secure the existence, it would prevent the expansion of the unit, and if, by its method of working, this instinct tends to neutralise its own efficiency, an unknown quantity remains in human progress, since self-sacrifice exists among men, and since human communities are constantly increasing in cohesion and the power further to expand. The leverage of a more far-reaching motive must be sought which will account for action in which self-interest is for the time forgotten ; for deeds of self-sacrifice which stir the pulses of all who hear the story of them told ; for the willing acceptance by many, of life's sorrow and its suffering as instruments, in subduing the instinct of individual self-insistence which continually molests them. Since no instinct from within

man can be found, which is capable of working these effects, the strongest agency of all, the individual instinct, though effective up to a certain point, being insufficient to account for action which strikes a higher level, a force must be conceived of which works from without man, a force which must be capable of producing effects which no human agency will explain.

And this motive force has been found by the Intuitive School in the assumption, which it has accepted without proof, that there exists a Higher Power which makes demands on human conduct, irrespective of the benefit which can be proved to accrue to the individual himself through obedience, and it asserts that belief in the working of this power can induce a condition of mind and consequent action which no instinct from within man can effect. And if, as on this view, the process of development works through the survival of the largest and most cohesive communities, then a force making for the cohesion and growth of communities is shown to exist. And if the development of human communities has been furthered on the part of their members by an apprehension of, and attempt at co-operation in laws which make for cohesion and growth, then man's faith in the existence of a force which works through law, and his consequent attempt at obedience to law, are shown to have been essential factors in the development of his communities. An agency is

brought to bear on conduct which goes beyond a consideration of the profit to be derived by the individual from his own action, an agency the operation of which necessitates a belief in that which man cannot rightly formulate, an obedience, the issues of which he cannot pretend to foresee. He conceives of the nature of that force, of those laws, as his ignorance best permits at any given time, and under this best conception he worships the still unknown God.

Moreover, in every experience of his life man comes into touch with this unknown Agency, sometimes through laws which he cannot grasp, but to which, willy-nilly, he conforms ; sometimes through laws whose provisions he has vaguely or more clearly grown to understand ; laws which clash with the individual instinct, and which, in consequence, he may fight or try to evade ; or to which submitting, he may endeavour to adjust his purposes and will. By being led on constantly to realise the need of submission and obedience to such law as he can grasp, he reaches a belief in the existence of a purpose which he cannot understand, carried out by a hand whose working he can only dimly discern, and this faith exercises a function in the control of conduct which the motive of self-interest is unable at any time to assume. Knowledge as it advances seems to justify this faith, although it is compelled to wage war continually against the exact definitions which harden round the

conceptions formed of that unknown power, and which prevent those conceptions from expanding.

For it has been impossible to bring the leverage of the controlling Force to bear on the conduct of men in an abstract form, and it has been essential to conceive of and define the nature of this Force and to represent it to the understanding of communities in forms sufficiently concrete to make it operative on the conduct of their members. The exact definitions of the Deity which enter into all religious systems have been the result of this necessity. It has been essential, moreover, that the individual instinct should be turned to account, and that through its agency the higher motive Force should be brought to bear on human consciousness. In the hands of the world's religious teachers the eventual results to the individual of right or wrong action have been removed to some extent from considerations of tangible profit or loss in this world, at the present time, to another world to be entered upon after this life is over. The arm of the lever is thus extended to meet the individual instinct, and an infinite Force is brought to bear, working from a region unknown and beyond the scope of human apprehension. The individual instinct is employed, but its action thus reinforced is made to extend over a wider field, and self-sacrifice becomes desirable, since

the advantage to be gained in another life is conceived of as making good the apparent loss in this.

There are Utilitarians who claim that this employment of the individual instinct leaves consequent action within the province of their philosophy.¹ But when once the existence of a Higher Power is conceived of as ordering the after consequences of human conduct in a world, the existence of which cannot be proved, the solid ground of proved individual self-interest on which Utilitarians take their stand is partly forsaken, and motives are employed which have become entangled with the things of faith.

How far the individual motive working alone could have secured the cohesion and growth of existing communities it is impossible to prove, since no human community has come into being without the Intuitive Motive worked into a system of belief as an integral part of its structure. The conclusion is therefore justified that the Intuitive Motive so employed has been an essential factor in the existence and growth of such communities. But all religious systems have been compelled to employ the individual instinct to bring the wider motive into touch with human consciousness ; and the conclusion that the individual motive is an essential factor in human progress is thereby also justified. The two motives have been interdependent,

¹ "History of European Morals," vol. i. pp. 14, 15, 16.

neither alone having been able to bring about that which has been effected. But if it be granted that the great stride made by man has been the direct outcome of his power of recognising and co-operating with the demands made on conduct by an Agency which operates from beyond man himself, it must follow that those communities the individual members of which are most strongly actuated by the wider motive must be the communities which best succeed ; and since the operation of this Agency is in the direction of subduing or deflecting the individual instinct, it must follow that while the Intuitive motive gains in force and efficiency the individual motive must lose in the same degree. While the scope of the one widens, the scope of the other must decrease. The hope of heaven and the fear of hell which appeal to the individual instinct, and which are employed as incentives to right action, are in no sense integral parts of the motive of the Intuitive School, which takes its stand on a wider basis. They are but makeshift concessions to human limitations ; they might atrophy and fall away, but the ultimate need of submission and obedience to the Power which transcends man's understanding would remain.

When the progressive human being shifts the centre of his aim towards the centre of the lesser and again of the larger units to which he belongs, and again towards those still larger

units towards which he is impelled to make way—the eventual profit to himself is a subsidiary, not a primary motive in his action. He moves in conscious obedience to greater laws whose existence he realises as integral parts of a larger purpose which he cannot understand. He may have formulated his ideal of God—the Power at the back of law—in a narrow or extensive way, he may have been actuated by inducements of a more or less disinterested kind, but a motive force which has gone beyond the individual self-seeking instinct has evidently been at work in all human communities, even though the individuals have felt after it only by means of the individual instinct itself. And although the concrete conceptions of God and Duty which represent that unknown Power to man's mind may be crude and feeble, in so far as a mental apprehension of that outside Force is essential, the best representation which at the given place and time can be grasped, however far it fall behind the reality, is essential too, since higher conceptions which he could not grasp would avail him nothing. Man has to be content, as it were, to walk by the light of a small lamp which shows something of the road, since the full light would blind his eyes, and the way would be henceforth hidden.

If this be granted, and if it can be shown that it has been the aim of the religious systems of the world to represent the need of self-restraint in obedience to the decrees of a Higher

Power in such a form as shall make it operative on the general mind, then it must follow that those communities possessed of the religious systems most conducive to this end must be the communities which best succeed.

Reviewing the religious systems of the world with a view to ascertaining the main ends which they have in view, it would seem that there are two constituents which are common to them all ; the first being an apprehension, however crude, as to the Source of those forces which control all being, forces which man realises but cannot gainsay, and towards which no attitude is tenable but one of submission ; the second being a recognition, however imperfect, of a prompting from within man which is at enmity with the demands of the Power which controls all life, and which must be restrained by the individual if he would merit the favour and assistance of that Power. An attitude of submission to the Deity, under the best ideal the time can produce, is the first demand of all religious systems ; an attitude of opposition to the adverse force, and so of conscious endeavour after obedience to the will of the Deity, as man at the time can best decipher that will, is the second demand.

If these two elements are the elements common to all religions from the crudest to the most mature, then it would seem to follow that they are the essential elements of all religions ;

while the exact definitions of the nature of the Deity (an apprehension of whose attributes is always expanding and becoming more spiritual with man's mental and moral growth), together with the motives which are urged to induce obedience in those with whom the main motive is out of sight—these must be non-essential elements, since they are passing phases and fade and change with place and time. The ultimate leverage of inexorable law which centres outside this universe, and shapes the issues of all being, remains always the same ; the definitions and motives used to explain and enforce that which is still beyond the grasp of man are like connecting cranks and pulleys, which bring him into touch with that Eternal Force, and which must be made use of till the greater leverage can be directly brought to bear. To deny the existence of the Eternal Force because man's efforts at conception are stultified by human limitations, would appear to be as futile as it would be for a child to deny the existence of its country's government because its mind cannot understand its constitution or grasp the methods of its administration. While for a community to act without reference to Divine coercion when in conflict with communities which are acting under its consolidating influence is inevitably to court disaster, as well for the community as for the individuals of which it is composed.

The forms under which man apprehended the Deity in the earliest times of enlightenment were of necessity as crude as the powers of his mind were immature. As consciousness dawned upon him, and he awoke by its means to a sense of the great unseen forces which control all being, forces of which, then as now, he was compelled to give himself an account, he contented himself with explanations which to minds more adult seem strangely inadequate. He could only localise on earth, or, as it were, project upon the clouds some ideal, crude but aspiring, of the Source of the forces from which he found no escape. Images in wood or stone were sufficient sometimes to embody his conceptions, and he shaped and worshipped such semblances as he could conceive of the unknown Power through them. Sometimes it seemed as if those highest of his kind who had passed from earth embodied them. Sometimes the sun, moon, or stars, sometimes the living people who possessed the greatest might in leadership and conquest were idealised by him and became his Gods. The conceptions were many, for each unit found its own and passed it on, and so gradually many Gods began to people Heaven and even Earth.

But the ideal of the Deity grew always in spirituality with man's mental and moral advance ; each new conception of God, wherever formulated, was on higher lines than that which

went before in the same place. In Egypt, which as a nation assimilated in the process of growth many diverse peoples, and with the peoples their religious conceptions, the gulf between the rulers and the ruled became so vast, that the conceptions possible to the one were beyond the mental grasp of the other. Here, therefore, while the ideal of the Deity grew and became spiritualised among the learned, the old polytheistic conceptions, many of which were not even human in semblance, were left to the unlettered multitude. The priests conceived of, and initiated their followers into a high monotheistic ideal, and it was possible in Egypt for two religious conceptions to run side by side, higher or lower, according to the mental and moral grasp of the worshipper. But that the want of unity of ideal in their case as in others constituted an element of weakness there can be but little doubt.

With the Hebrew race, which grew on tribal lines, the case was different. The Israelites, even when they had annexed a soil and grown into a nation, remained but a single tribe, the offspring of one recognised progenitor ; and the ideal of the Deity, like the tribe itself, remained but one. But this ideal with them, as with all other peoples, increased in spirituality and lost much of its merely human semblance. The God who walked in the Garden of Eden in the cool of the day and convinced Adam and Eve

of disobedience, to the mind of the great Hebrew Lawgiver was apprehended as the Eternal self-existent Force, Jehovah, the great "I AM." The influence on the minds of the Israelites of the many-visaged representations of the Gods of Egypt drove Moses to reconsider and reform a conception of the Deity suited to a race capable of grasping a religious ideal far beyond that of any other race at the same time, and higher than that of many advanced races which even now hold sway. No visible representation of the Divine form was permitted, or, except in individual cases, desired by the people. They were content with a visible representation of the dwelling-place of the Deity on Earth, the Holy of Holies, and they there worshipped the Presence of which, as they realised, no human power could rightly conceive. By its unity and purity of ideal the Hebrew religion thus consolidated the tribe into a unit of such intense cohesive force that it exists at the present day, still held together by its religious conception, though its component parts are scattered all over the world ; a tribe which, though unable to retain its soil, and unable to grow, can hold its own by the intensity of its religious cohesion, in the midst of the larger national units, feeding as it were on their life, and resented by many nations as a parasitic growth is resented.

But while the conception of the Supreme Force advances in spirituality with the mental

and moral grasp of those who form the conception, and while the conceived bounds of the favour of the Deity extend as the conception of the Supreme Force advances, that conception has to be brought within reach of the lower as well as the higher intellects of the community, and the tendency of the multitude is always towards a lowering of the ideal conceived of by those who are able to see farther than the rest, and towards a limiting of the extension of the Almighty favour. The mind of a community has thus a refractive influence on abstract truth, since it cannot pass it on in the same state in which it is received. It is compelled, moreover, to make use of concrete methods of expression and definition, and these gradually enclose the ideal so that it can no longer expand. Thus to the Israelites, while they retained their lofty monotheistic conception, Jehovah became the Deity exclusively of their own race. He was the Lord of Hosts who warred always on their side against their enemies. And gradually the rituals, and ceremonial observances which grew up around their worship, cased in the great ideal to their minds and limited their power of apprehension. The methods of worshipping were laid stress on at the expense of obedience to the will of the Deity who was worshipped. It would seem that at all times in human history the growth and solidification of the means of expressing

submission to the Divine Force, under whatever form it is apprehended, is the test of an arrest of growth in the ideal which is thus circumscribed, of a narrowing down of the belief in the extension of the Divine favour, which it is the aim of all advance in spirituality to extend.

When from the Jewish people, unique in their ideal of religious governance, though at a time when the ideal was contracting and its limits had become fossilised, that Teacher arose whose vision penetrated to a point which still lies veiled even from the Aryan mind, it was inevitable that his doctrine should be rejected by the people to whom he spoke. The Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven, that far-reaching unit whose confines should eventually embrace all mankind in its brotherhood of love, was a conception impossible to a people whose existence was the outcome of their narrow intensity. That the favour of their God should be shared by the nations lying in darkness around them, was an ideal beyond their power of thought. But it was an ideal acceptable to the more tolerant Aryan mind, whose cohesion, less intensive, had been arrived at on other lines, and it spread in Europe with astounding rapidity when once its principles had taken root. But again, like all ideals, in the process of assimilation by the many minds it underwent a change. The great tolerance it

preached was circumscribed, the love it strove to infuse—that love which is the binding tissue of all communities—was limited in scope. The religious history of Europe is the history of how time after time the more enlightened and progressive peoples have tried to throw off the incubus of the accretions which have grown over the simplicity of the Christian ideal of God; and to extend the conceived limits of the favour of God which the narrowing influence of human instinct inevitably tends to curtail.

Mahomedanism in its turn, though on a lower plane than Christianity, was an advance on the star and angel worship of the Arabs. It made little or no way with the Aryan peoples, but it carried its advanced ideal through Northern Africa and parts of Asia, and it nurtured on its way a great civilisation.

In Asia many civilisations rose and culminated and declined while Europe lay with its possibilities maturing, but still undeveloped. Their day seems to have come and gone earlier than that of the Western peoples. The vast populations of those Eastern nations are held together by cohesive forces which have the appearance of being survivals from the past rather than living and growing impulses which lead on to new developments and fresh progress. If it be true that an effective and progressive religious ideal is essential to the

growth of a human community, then it would seem that the Eastern nations must inevitably be declining in force and progressive power, since their religious ideals (and the East has been the birthplace of practically all religious ideals) appear to be losing rather than gaining in spirituality and enlightenment. The early history of Asia lies behind a veil denser than that which obscures the beginnings of the Western nationalities ; but in the earliest religious records of the East, which are the earliest religious records of the world, a pure and childlike conception of the forces of nature, as embodying the Divine Force, is revealed which grew into the more adult conceptions of the Upanishads. In modern Hinduism this ideal of the Deity and the demand of the Deity on human conduct is almost obscured behind the dogmas and ritual forms which have grown up around it. Conduct has sunk to a lower place and tolerance has waned, as always happens when forms of observance assume an undue prominence. Buddhism, which threw off many of these overgrowths for a purer conception of conduct in obedience to a force which to the Buddha's mind assumed no concrete form, has in its turn become overgrown and degraded. Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, and other Eastern religions are in like manner declining in vitality ; though it remains to be proved whether life enough exists

in any of these Eastern civilisations to enable them to shake off the accretions of ritual and dogma which hold in their ideals, and to reform a conception of God and Duty which in a living and operative form appears to be essential to the growth of a human community.

But while his conception of God grows clearer as man himself advances in spirituality and intellectual apprehension, at the same time his conception of the adverse force which perpetually hinders his progress grows clearer too. The human mind being compelled in its early stages to embody all abstract apprehensions in a concrete form, man was compelled to conceive of this adverse force as concrete ; he conceived of it as a being external to himself, as an opponent to the Deity, a fallen servant of the Higher Power, or as a spirit of evil at war with the spirit of good. The great difficulty in explaining how the all-powerful Deity has remained incapable of subjecting this adverse force has been met by many assumptions ; but it is only as the embodied form of the tempter is fading, as a shadow on the wall fades at the bringing in of a brighter light, that the force adverse to man is becoming localised within man's own nature as an instinct implanted in all beings endowed with life, as part of the very machinery of development devised by a Wisdom, to whose counsels man submits though he fails to understand their

issues. He begins to recognise it as a force which is inimical to him when unrestrained, but whose existence when restrained is essential to his progress, under the scheme on which it has been ordained that development should proceed. Man's greater knowledge as to the nature of good and evil leaves him still but little less ignorant, but it relieves him of the incubus of erroneous certainty. He is still compelled, as ever, to submit to the will of the Maker of worlds and of men ; he finds himself still at war, as ever, with that which impels him to act against the methods by which that will has ordained that he shall progress. But he has risen higher and has a wider outlook ; he sees more distinctly the end which he is making for ; the final need of obedience to God—the Source of all power and purpose—grows clearer to his eyes. The obligation to repress his instinct of narrow self-seeking in favour of the wider aim grows more insistent.

Nor would this attitude of willing submission and obedience be changed were the mind of man to outgrow the mental and moral limitations which have compelled him to narrow his conceptions of the Deity to his own human and shifting standards. Being himself the highest result of creation that he knows of, he has, as yet, none but human lines on which to think out an ideal of God, no language that is not human, and so bounded by terms of sex

and other limitations, in which to express the ideal he is able to conceive. But since this ideal has hitherto been growing with his mental and moral growth, and since the human semblance has been fading from the Deity as man himself has advanced in humanity, it seems inevitable that a further growth in knowledge and in righteousness should still further free his mind from the human disabilities which clog the rising of his thought towards the unsearched mysteries of God. Since in his days of cultivated licentiousness, and unrestrained cruelty, the only conception he could form of God was of a Deity or Deities of like passions with himself; and since this conception has changed with his own mental and moral change to the ideal of a loving Father, of an all-powerful God whom only the pure in heart can rightly apprehend, it would seem that his past growth in purity and love, which has run side by side with his growth in wisdom, may be taken as a guarantee that a wider knowledge and a larger love will enable him to form a still higher ideal of God, and yet a higher and a higher, till the very truth of God and man's ideal of God approach more nearly one same and actual truth.

And it seems inevitable also that towards this higher conception of the Deity and law man's attitude should grow more reverent, that he should become more religious as he grows more wise. If he can neither resist nor ignore

the mighty forces which play about his being, forces producing in himself the seeming miracles of birth and death, and all the details of happiness and misery which lie between ; and since with growing intelligence he must set the direction of his actions either with or against those forces ; it seems inevitable that a better realisation of their vastness and immanence, and the wisdom which, as he perceives, lies at the root of those which he can understand, should increase his faith in, and the willingness of his submission to, those vaster forces which lie beyond his mental grasp, and which work on lines which baffle and confuse his finite judgments. Moreover, although he is unable to dream even of the great outline of Creation's scheme, if he can clearly trace a purpose as regards himself running through the little fraction with which he has to do, of which purpose his growth in the restraint of single-self seeking seems on this earth to be the present passing phase—then it would seem also inevitable that as he more clearly discerns that purpose, he should more earnestly desire to struggle on to its fulfilment, his own mind testifying to the wisdom of the great decrees, his own will co-operating with the will of God.

If, however, it is essential to the existence of a human community that it should be possessed of a religious system capable of inducing submission and obedience to law, it is at the same

time essential to the growth of a community that its religious system should be capable of expansion with the expansion of the community itself. For whereas, to be effectual, those who administer law must have their eyes turned on to the community and its interests in relation to other communities, those who guide the abstract consciousness of the people—their religious teachers—to be effectual, must have their eyes turned on to the unknown, and man's relation to that which he is able to apprehend of the unknown. These are like watchmen straining their eyes to see what the glimmering dawn reveals, and while they are seeking wider revelation the progress of the unit is assured. But when they turn away content with that which is already seen, with mistaken certainties seemingly assured—for in the twilight many of the appearances of things have a tendency to mislead—they act as deterrents to the progress of the community which rests upon their guidance. The experience of all communities in this respect has been the same. The knowledge which has been apprehended by the more far-sighted has gradually assumed a stereotyped form. Intolerance, essential to the cohesion of a unit in process of formation, has emphasised the boundaries of the religious apprehension of the community in contradistinction to the religious apprehension of other communities ; the conception of the attributes of the Deity and

the demands made on human conduct have been formulated, and through constant repetition have, as it were, solidified around the religious ideal cramping its growth. Gradually the religious system which demanded submission to the decrees of the Deity and obedience to His law, and so consolidated the unity of the tribe or nation, has of itself usurped the reverence of the worshippers, who have confused the system with that which it strove to reveal. The people have clung to that which helped to unite them into the community which has been achieved, ignoring the larger law of growth, which is always at work side by side with the law of existence, and which must be regarded if the unit is to progress. The treatment meted out to those religious teachers who have discerned the larger law, and have sought to bring it within sight of the community, may be taken as a measure of the intolerance which has been needed to create cohesion within the community itself.

There has also been another source of disaster to the community as to the individual arising out of the evil action of mind. For it has befallen again and again when the religious ideal, cramped and unable to grasp new law, has ceased to progress, that intellect has usurped the post of watchman, ignoring the sleeping religious faculty, and human intellect thus standing alone in high places has played into the

hands of instinct. The knowledge gained has been turned to another employment than the fostering of obedience to law: it has been made use of in ministering to the self-interest and self-aggrandisement of its possessors, and the community, thus misguided, has not only been led away from the direction of progress but it has been hurried towards disintegration and disaster. The history of Greece, of the Roman Empire, of all communities undermined by luxury and vice, shows that knowledge can only advance effectively as it allies itself with that which tends to strengthen and ensure the character of a people, while religion, on the other hand, can only ensure the character of a people as it allies itself with all that the mind can gather of new knowledge and new law. Man's ideal of the Deity and of His will must grow that he may grow himself; man's knowledge must grow that his ideal of the Deity and of law may grow.

VI

THE UNIT FROM THE STANDPOINT
OF HISTORY

VI

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WHEN we turn to the records of history to ascertain whether in their light this view of human communities as the ascendant units in the great struggle for existence will find confirmation, there seems to be evidence in its favour standing out on all sides. When history begins, the human being, in matters of defence and offence, has already ceased to act alone. The struggle is no longer a struggle between one human being and another human being, but between one tribe or nation and another tribe or nation, within all of which antagonism between the contained members is condemned. It is with these larger communities, already to some extent organised, that history has to do. It treats of the component human beings only as their actions are related to the welfare and progress of the larger organisms themselves.

At the dawn of western history we find those nations already in existence which, on despotic lines, uprose and flourished and declined in the region of the Nile and the Euphrates. Each

was possessed of its system for apprehending and bringing to bear on the general mind the best available conception of the Divine Force which demanded cohesion within the community, and an attitude of defence or offence towards all other competing communities. No tribe, no nation, has come into being without such an apprehension, and we seem to be justified therefore in concluding that a sense of governance from a Source beyond man's control, which shapes his destiny, and demands his compliance with its dictates, is an essential factor in the growth of a tribe or nation. It is true that when we consider the remains of some of these religious systems after the ideal with which they were infused has been warped and degraded by the action of human instinct accentuated by thought and consciousness, they appear to be little capable of binding a people together or of raising its standard of conduct. But when the religious system is thus degraded it will be seen that the community is on its decline ; while the growing religious apprehension of a growing people is never without a simple force and sincerity, the efficiency of which in securing submission and obedience to the great Force which dominates the universe it is not difficult to realise.

Of the tribal stage of human existence history has left but scanty records, since in but few instances, if, indeed, in more than one instance—

and that an exceptional one—has the mental advance of tribes been sufficient to allow of the making or preserving of history. But the story of this stage may be traced to some extent in the existing conditions of such savage races as survive. With these primitive races we find that the single human being has become merged to a considerable extent in the community. He has already become part of a larger whole, and the question is no longer a question only as to who best holds his own against his fellows ; but as to who, at the same time, best conduces to the force of the larger unit, by so restraining his individual antagonisms, that the larger unit itself may best hold its own. Fitness to survive has already to a great extent changed its character, self-seeking has acquired a wider, though still narrow basis, and within the tribe, law in its most primitive form has begun to be enforced. Development in this stage is still achieved in the main, unconsciously, as it is achieved wholly in the lower forms of life, where consciousness is undeveloped, and as it is achieved in part throughout all life up to the highest point that has yet been attained to by man. But even within the lowest existing tribes abstract consciousness has begun to dawn, and some crude conception of a Power beyond himself has been conceived of by savage man as the ultimate Source of his primitive laws, while the obligation which he owes to his brother man

within the tribe, as crudely conceived, is connected with his perception of that Power. He is already feebly conscious of being worked upon by the leverage of a Force beyond his control, a force made manifest to him through thunder, pestilence, and defeat ; through sunshine, health, and prosperity ; through the antagonism of his brother man, and through his good will. It seems probable that the degenerate religious beliefs of some of the lowest surviving tribes may be regarded as degraded survivals of purer conceptions of the same peoples when they were achieving such cohesion as they can be said to have attained.

But beyond this tribal stage the development of these forms has been arrested ; they have been hemmed in from further opportunity, and left behind as outlying branches, while tribes more capable of increase in size and complexity of structure have moved on in the main line and have arrived at conditions more advanced. And in the case of tribes this development has apparently been arrived at by methods similar to those by which the development of all life's forms has been achieved.

The growth of the tribe was of necessity affected by the considerable area necessary to sustain the life of the members of the tribe during what may be called the fluid period of man's existence, in which the ground remaining uncultivated, he had to move from place to

place in search of food, and having exhausted the provision of one area, was driven on to another. When, therefore, the individual tribe had exceeded the size conducive to the most successful existence, family groups were separated off to proceed in search of the means of existence in less peopled spaces, and these in their turn became individual, self-seeking units.

It seems probable that the geographical position of these tribes determined to some extent the method on which their cohesion should be secured. The rapidly increasing tribes whose position made difficult their extension over a wide area would find competition acute, and where competition is acute development tends to be rapid. But development achieved in this way under stress of antagonism is compelled to forego the provision for further opportunities of growth in favour of the means of ensuring present existence. The unit thus consolidated secures cohesion at any cost, and is compelled to resort to methods in which defence and self-preservation are the essential aims.

The first need, therefore, of a growing tribe, in a contracted area, would be to specialise a leader who could dominate its members and secure their co-operation in the inevitable conflicts which would arise with other growing tribes where competition was severe. The necessity of securing food for the many mouths would lie with the many individuals themselves ;

but in conflict, organised action of the whole unit would be essential, and this could only be arrived at through the agency of a central control. The tribe most capable of acting as one body under a competent leader would of necessity be the most successful in the struggle, and the consequent confidence accorded to the successful leader by his people would tend to make his sway more absolute. In the relation which would thus arise between the ruler and the ruled would be found the nucleus of a despotic governance. When tribes thus consolidated into one unit learnt to improve the productive power of the soil by artificial means, and so secured to it the possibility of sustaining a greater number of its members on a smaller area, the soil not only gained an added value, but it began to hold the people bound to it ; they made it their own and fought for its possession. When once this bond of union had been consolidated between soil and people, the temporary sheltering places sufficient to sparse tribes on the move were abandoned in favour of more permanent structures by which the population could be housed ; temples or other edifices were set up, where the best conception a given people could form of its favouring Deity or Deities could be worshipped or enshrined, and all these were enclosed in defensive walls. The arduous work of producing or transporting the materials needed for these

purposes was laid upon the members of conquered or incorporated tribes, who were held to their toil by the coercion of the lash.

These conjectures as to the method of growth of communities under despotic rule, in so far as they are conjectures and not fragments of ascertained facts, are met, as has been said, by the actual records of history itself at the time when the Assyrian, Babylonian, Egyptian, and other peoples had established themselves, and had made intellectual advance sufficient to admit of their recording their own progress. The development of these peoples was notable, and comparatively rapidly achieved ; but in the same way in which the earlier organisms below man were compelled, under stress of competition, to make provision for individual self-defence at the expense of provision for further growth, so these earlier kingdoms, apparently also under stress of competition, were compelled to resort to methods of growth which precluded further development.

It is interesting to note that they not only adopted the methods of cohesion peculiar to despots, but, like the crustaceans, they secured the protection of the unit under attack by providing external defences. The walls of Babylon had an outer circumference of from forty-five to sixty miles, and could shelter the whole population of Babylonia in time of siege. Sometimes the security of the whole unit was thus

attempted, sometimes that of its constituent parts, as the fortifications of ancient towns will show, also castles for the protection of families and clans, armour for the protection of the single human being. It is only at a more progressive stage of growth that protection of this cumbersome kind is abandoned in favour of freely moving masses depending for their success on their offensive rather than their defensive possibilities, in the same way as the vertebrate organisms have, with few exceptions, abandoned the methods of crustaceans and insects by which they enclose their bodies in a bony or horny case.

Among the tribes which competed with the early civilisations, and which were in progress of growth into the more consolidated condition of nations, some, which began without the limitations of despotic rule, were compelled in self-defence to adopt it, and in adopting it to achieve temporary survival and success. But the more effectively despotic rule asserted itself, the more certainly was development beyond a certain point arrested. For despotisms suffer not only from the simplicity of their structure, which, by its nature, forbids increase in complexity, and so precludes growth of a continuously progressive kind, but they suffer also from the fact that the position in which the successful despot is placed is one which plays into the hand of instinct. His capacity to act

for the community's good is undermined by the exaggerated sense of self-importance, and the need of self-gratification fostered by his people ; and again by the rebellion of the same people at his tyrannies, when mind has done its work on human instinct. The ruler who led his armies to battle, infused with a high ideal and the conviction that their special Deity favoured their cause alone, fostered by his action the cohesion of his people, and while the sense of common interest drew the tribe or nation together, unity was intensified. But when this tension was relieved by victory, and the apparent need of strenuousness waned, the ruler too often fell a victim to his own greatness. Inordinate consciousness of his achievements pandered to by his grateful people overwhelmed his sense of proportion with regard to self. He became steeped in vices generated by the action of consciousness on instincts of all kinds, and the vicious influence filtered down from the ruler to the ruled. Thus undermined by the diseases of morbid self-interest, the organism became an easy prey to others still in the strenuous stage of growth and progress. If new danger from without could again force unity of ideal and aim on the ruler and his people, the diseases of success and luxury might be combated, but if these diseases were left to grow the community was doomed. When Solomon in all his glory and confidence of wisdom lost sight

of his higher aims in self-indulgence and profuseness of luxury, the kingdom was on the brink of division into two parts, never again to be united. When Nebuchadnezzar, after raising Babylon to its highest pitch of prosperity, went mad with his own magnificence, the nation's end drew on. Less than twenty years later Cyrus was at the gates of Babylon, and Babylonia became a province of Persia.

But while these Semetic, Hamitic, and Mongolian peoples were measuring strength and attaining to a high level of civilisation in that nursery of despotisms South and East of the Mediterranean Sea, another more laggard people was slowly maturing on other lines in an unknown cradle-land—a people of larger make, though still in intellectual infancy, a people who remained perhaps for centuries of centuries in obscurity, but who meanwhile were maturing possibilities of a wider development on a basis of greater stability.

It seems probable that the geographical position of the Aryan people favoured the expansion of tribes without calling into play the acute competition which conduced to the survival, and hastened the development of the earlier civilisations. Offshoots from the parent tribe could remain in touch with its interests while removing themselves from its immediate neighbourhood in search of food and pasture. The spirit of acute antagonism between tribes

and their separated offshoots would thus remain in abeyance, and at the same time cohesion throughout the whole resultant unit would be effected at a slower pace. The cohesion of a community growing on these larger lines would be of a different quality from that nurtured under despotic rule; it would be less intense and concentrated, but it would be able to co-exist with a spirit of wider tolerance. No single dominant source of control, producing a compact cohesion, would be called into play where a compact cohesion was not needed. With the Aryan people the control appears to have been distributed among the heads of families or tribes who, in counsel together, took measures on behalf of the whole community.

It would seem likely, moreover, that while abundant room for growth was allowed to these people, they were at the same time protected geographically from the inroads of alien tribes, and that rivers or mountains, at any rate partially, defended their borders. If, however, aggressive peoples succeeded in making an advance, they would have found the whole community of affiliated tribes acting as one unit, and by its mass constituting a source of strength capable of immense resisting power, even though the cohesion within the mass were not of the most concentrated kind.

When in its turn this wide and sheltered area became overgrown so that the soil could no

longer provide food for the growing tribes, nor pasture for their flocks, the pressure of necessity was relieved by migrations which took place on a large scale.¹ This separation by the pushing off of members from an overcrowded area was very different in kind from the separation of offshoots from communities organised on despotic lines. With those the nature of their governance precluded more than one central source of control, and separation, if it took place, was an act of disruption leaving parent and offspring mutually antagonistic. With these, the migration was apparently peaceful, a necessity agreed upon between the tribes as want of food and space was forced upon the general mind. Provision was made for departing tribes at the most suitable moment of the year for starting new ventures, and although these tribes in the midst of new environments in time lost sight of the root from which they grew, and though, by intermixture with other races, many of their more salient characteristics were modified, the tolerance which resulted from this method of growth was apparent throughout their subsequent history.

We see evidence of their influence first when the Median and Persian empires came to the front, Cyrus, and more especially Darius, bringing new ideals of tolerance to their conquests

¹ See "The Evolution of the Aryan," from the German of N. Ihering, trans. by A. Drucker, M.P.

and their internal government. When Babylon was taken the Jews were sent home to their own country and their own religion. Babylon, though annexed to Persia, was permitted to retain its own religion, and in the vast domains which came under the rule of Darius the same tolerance of religious, and hence of racial differences, was everywhere observed. The internal rule of Darius aimed, moreover, at promoting union among the people themselves rather than at holding them together by bonds, which rulers less enlightened endeavoured to retain in their own keeping.

When Persia yielded it was only to races more purely Aryan, and these Aryan peoples became, as they have remained, in different degrees the dominant peoples of the world. As in Asia so in Europe offshoots from the Aryan people had made way before their recorded history began, pressing on in the directions of least resistance, and perhaps conquering and driving on peoples of other races by whom they found the land already occupied. It seems probable that there were races already in Europe whose advance had been made on the simplest lines, and whose communities were of the loosely-knit kind which grew out of mere propinquity of parent and offshoots, unconsolidated by any of the outside influences which drove other peoples into closer union for the common good. These would have been pushed

on, or rapidly overborne by the advancing people and perhaps absorbed into their mass, while the cohesion among the migrating Aryans would be further consolidated as competition with those who obstructed their way became an essential factor in their onward movement. Those branches of the race—the ancestors of the Greeks and Romans—which came down upon the borders of the Mediterranean Sea and gradually took possession of the out-jutting peninsulas may have found still earlier offshoots of their own race in possession together with races of other origins. There can be no doubt but that as the sea-board was reached they were quickly brought into touch with nations of a high degree of civilisation whose mental stores they were able, before long, to make their own, the sea being at all times a friendly province to those who can fit themselves to the demands of the winds, since it offers a ready-made high-road to trade and culture, while to hostile peoples it opposes a neutral territory. With the advantage of an extensive sea-board and the near neighbourhood of highly civilised nations, the peoples who came into Greece, bringing with them that wider ideal of tolerance which is the keynote of the Aryan character, were able to crystallise out achievements in many branches of art and science which remain for the admiration of the world. Their premature intellectual development, and especially that of Athens,

may have been due to some happy mingling of racial proclivities and fortunate opportunities acted upon by the tolerance of a government which left a wide scope to its citizens for profiting by the intellectual possibilities of the time ; or it may have been due to yet unknown causes. The tolerance, however, appears to have been premature—as was its intellectual development. While the Greek states grew up side by side, united in religion and in speech, but self-governed and self-contained, the nation was forming no backbone, no common centre from which it could expand ; and gradually the methods of government of the more civilised nations about them crept into their organisation. Despots began to assume sway, not over the whole people but over the individual states, and antagonism, the handmaid of despotism, began to outgrow the cohesion which existed between the states themselves. The nation expanded from many centres, and the strife for supremacy between these centres eventually sapped its strength. The Hellenic States apparently suffered from being tolerant before they were efficiently cohesive. Their greatest foe, namely, Persia, became from this cause their greatest friend, for, in self-defence against this power, their nearest approach to national unity was brought about. It was the victorious Greece divided again within herself and at war from within which had to succumb to Rome.

Of the vitality of the early religious motives which held each State in one, and again united many of the States among themselves, there can be no doubt. Worship of the Supreme Power under such manifestations as the mind of man could then conceive was an essential factor in Greek life, and animated its family and patriotic ideals; allegiance to these larger units of family and state, involving self-suppression in the members of those units, was realised as a duty involved in allegiance to the Gods themselves. When, with the development of mind, the immature religious system was outgrown, when the dogmas and rituals which at first had been elastic and pliant to the nation's growth became consolidated and stereotyped, schools of philosophic thought were formed which supplied motives of action, divergent in source, but some at least inspired by the belief in a wise and beneficent Deity, and in a great ordering of the world which transcended man's control.

The inadequacy of intellectual achievement alone in securing the life of a community compared with the function of unity of purpose actuated by a sense of the Divine Sanction is well illustrated, as Mr. Benjamin Kidd has shown,¹ in the history of Greece, whose passing from supremacy was coincident with her period of highest intellectual culture. For at

¹ "Social Evolution," p. 254.

this time the motives which could keep the disintegrating action of mind efficiently in check were failing, the conceptions of the Gods were losing their vitality, while the philosophic schools of thought were too abstract in their teaching to compass the needs of any but the higher thinkers.

Rome meanwhile was more slowly maturing on more enduring lines. Her unity emanated from a single centre which remained supreme, retaining the allegiance, religious in its patriotism, of the whole ever-increasing empire. Duty to the state was the ruling ideal of the individual, and allegiance to this ideal was implied in allegiance to the gods. In conflict with Greece, Rome, thus compact, of necessity gained the ascendancy, as in conflict with Carthage she had already proved her might. Her tolerance in comparison with the standard of tolerance of the age, was as great as her cohesive power, and her domain pushed on through the world then known with unrivalled force and persistence.

But Rome, like the Grecian States, came under the influence of the nations about her, and gradually her tolerant Aryan mode of governance gave place to the despotic method. As her sway extended and vast territories came under her rule, it may have been that the despotic method was essential to enable her to hold her conquests under one head; but

while this mode of government may have temporarily compassed her greatness, in resorting to it she apparently took the first step away from the possibility of establishing an enduring Empire. Her Empire grew, not by the consolidation of parent and offspring into one forceful and compact community of common interest, but by the assimilation of adverse elements which could be held in one only on despotic lines, and whose cohesion had no existence except as it related to its enforced allegiance to one dominating source of control.

And as with the advance of thought the stereotyped conceptions of the Gods became inadequate to command worship, and as the motives of allegiance to them began to wane, the inevitable influence on mind of self-seeking ineffectually restrained began to make way. The diseases of mind began to penetrate the tissues of the mighty organism, and decline became inevitable, though the progress of decay and disintegration were as slow as the growth of the empire had been steady and deliberate.

The actual duration of a nation's eminence depends, of necessity, on many factors beyond its powers of cohesion and extension. It depends on the size and cohesion of the nations round it, on its position with regard to those units, and on the extent to which its interests clash with theirs. Its vitality may be dying out, and only the bare husk of force may

remain standing for centuries, if no stronger force falls foul of it and wrecks the appearance of strength.

The vitality had so far died out of the Roman Empire before its fall that no mighty competing force on the same level of advance was needed to prove its vulnerability. Its conquerors were barbarian tribes more purely Aryan in source and still untainted with those vices of the mind which are generated by despotic rule ; and these peoples invaded its borderland, and forced themselves gradually into the very heart of the Empire. They learnt of the people whom they conquered as they made their way, and in return they infused among them some of their unimpaired vitality, and their wider ideals.

It might have been expected that the introduction of Christianity would have re-vivified the decaying force of the Roman Empire ; but Christianity came to it at too late a date in its history. It was in no way connected with the growth and uprising of the State ; in no sense an integral part of its cohesion. Cleavage of the great unit had already set in before Christianity entered, and the new religion introduced new divisions, and so new elements of instability. Its wide tolerance, its gospel of universal brotherhood, and the doctrine of the extension of the favour of God to all mankind, made it rapidly acceptable to the Aryan peoples,

who welcomed it when it came, partly by reason of the very principles of tolerance which made it so impossible of assimilation to the Jews. The Hebrew race, hemmed in by narrow traditions and by racial exclusiveness, was compelled to reject it, but to the Aryan spirit it brought the needful ideal and enlightenment, and its principles actuated the cohesion of the different nations which grew out of, and around the Roman Empire.

But although the Western world was tolerant enough to welcome the principles of tolerance, it was still far too intolerant to retain them unimpaired. Differences of nationality made themselves felt in emphasising differences of intellectual and moral attitude, and the issues of the Christian ideal were narrowed down and adapted to the possibilities of the minds of those who accepted it. National, as well as individual, self-interest worked adversely on the new faith, excrescences were foisted on it by its votaries and the original teaching became obscured by the growths which gradually overlaid its purity.

When it is remembered that the minds of those who accepted Christianity had only been released by its agency from a degraded form of polytheism, it is no matter for wonder that its main principles should have undergone modification under the action of minds whose conceptions of the Deity had been so primitive. And

although at the time when Christianity was accepted the bondage to the old beliefs was merely nominal among the educated classes, still, it had been by the light of those beliefs that the Roman State had achieved her cohesion, the motives inspired by those beliefs had exercised the needful leverage in suppressing individual self-interest in the interests of the State ; and the sway of its ideals had established itself in the popular mind. During that period of transition also it was inevitable that human intellect should be brought into play in exactly defining the scope and nature of the new divine manifestation which was felt to be final—that it might be brought within reach of all minds. And as national temperament created differences of outlook, and as national intolerance accentuated those differences, divisions inevitably crept into the teaching of the Gospel of unity, hatreds into the promulgation of the Gospel of love.

But in spite of these differences, European history presented this new feature after the decline of the Roman Empire, namely, that of many nations, separated politically, but all actuated by a religious conception derived from one source. There was a community of religious ideal among peoples who were intolerant of each other, with the intolerance which must exist between units which, for the time being, represent the units of highest complexity.

In earlier communities the apparent boun-

daries of the religious and national communities had been identical. Each nation had a conception of its direct relation to the Deity, but was unable to extend that view. To the national eye which saw the light the rest of the world lay in darkness. But the tendency of thought has always been towards a freeing of the religious from the national boundary, towards a wider conception of the extension of the Kingdom of Heaven, and a great stride was made when the European nations, politically divided, thus found themselves united by a common faith. The religious unit now embraced many national units, and while the political Roman Empire was accomplishing its decline a new spiritual dominion was gradually being established over a corresponding area, with its centre in Rome, and its administration under the sway of a priestly potentate.

But the Roman Church, in attempting to found a spiritual supremacy on the lines of a secular Empire, in attempting to hold down and centralise religious authority on to this earth, though it may have accomplished a task which, at the time, no agency more advanced could have effected, of necessity circumscribed its limits by the lines on which it achieved religious cohesion. The Church reverted in its organisation to the principles of growth on which the earlier nationalities uprose. The Pope, as the mouthpiece of a final revelation,

assumed, in matters of faith, the absolute authority of a despot, he sedulously repressed the independence of all who would have strengthened themselves on their own lines of thought, and no development of any kind was permitted except on his initiative.¹ The knowledge gained of universal law could find no admittance into such a system, and, as a result of its very nature, growth beyond a certain point became impossible. As the dogmas and rituals of the Church gradually assumed a stereotyped and solid shape, the living mind of man outgrew the shell in which it found itself encased. Two courses opened out before it: either it must cease to grow, or it must escape from the conditions by which it found itself constrained, and, speaking broadly, the Latin races may be said to have chosen the former course, the Teutonic peoples the latter. The new bottle had grown stiff and inexpressive in its turn and the wine burst the bottle and escaped.

In the effort of a human community to expand, it is continually hampered by the incubus of the political or religious growths which have enabled it to achieve sufficient cohesion to exist. On his way towards a larger knowledge, man has been hindered by the very fabrics by which he has sought to

¹ The Roman Church still nominally holds the belief that the Sun goes round the Earth.

bring himself into touch with the unknown. Those who hold the seats of authority in religious matters, fearful lest mind should expand beyond their control, have insisted on the enduring and final nature of these fabrics, and it is therefore only in so far as mind can free itself from authority that its capacity lies for progress and for growth.

The essence of the Protestant spirit seems to have lain in its resistance to human authority in matters in which the higher allegiance was involved, its perception of the fact that a spiritual kingdom, as a result of its very nature and the derivation of its laws, can own no final authority in this world. Other issues were involved in the great conflict of ideals at the Reformation, but they seem all to have been subsidiary to this. And although, since their severance from the dominion of Rome, the administration of the affairs of the Protestant Churches has centred in one or other State for the convenience of that State, they have owned no final court of appeal but the Word of God, to which they have all given their allegiance.

But while the Protestant Churches yield obedience to no final human authority, many of the individuals who compose them are still held in bondage by their own limitations, they are constrained by a home-made intolerance which only differs in degree from that of the

older Church. They are at one in their resistance to Rome, and their common allegiance to the Word of God, to which they turn for guidance, but the many interpretations which can be given to the Word are employed by the intolerant spirit to sanction its own limitations. Different sections of the Protestant Churches ground their title to the favour of God on the especial clearness of their apprehension of the Divine Will, and the wider outlook is obscured by narrow intellectual self-insistence, the limit of God's favour is cramped to fit a human power of conceiving of its extent. There remains, however, this difference in the nature of the intolerance of the Roman and the Protestant communities:—that the intolerance of the Roman Church is authorised, and is an essential feature of its structure and method of development; while the intolerance existing between the Protestant sects themselves has no sanction except in the mental limitations of the individuals composing them.

The question arises as to why the Latin races which were Aryan in origin, and whose supremacy had grown on Aryan lines, should have proved less tolerant than the other branches of the same stock which have since asserted their strength. An answer may, perhaps, be found in the fact that other races driven before the Aryans to the sea-board were

absorbed into the populations of Greece and of the Roman Empire and gradually reacted on those populations. There are laws in connection with climate and environment not yet fully understood, which may have decided the gradual recrudescence of the earlier type of race in the South of Europe. Or it may have been that the Teutonic peoples having been left for more centuries in their primitive conditions, conditions which seem to have made for the more tolerant outlook, had, in their slower development, achieved a still more tolerant spirit than was possible with the earlier offshoots. There can be but little doubt that when these Teutonic peoples penetrated into the Roman Empire, although they threw back the civilisation of Europe, as if they had been children asserting themselves over the counsels of their elders—they had in them the germs of wider ideals and greater possibilities, and as, in their turn, they are growing up, their counsels are possessed of a more far-seeing and progressive wisdom, the civilisation of which they are capable is on a larger scale.

It is from among the Teutonic peoples that the new and wider ideal of Empire is uprising, the ideal of a unit of greater comprehensiveness than any which has yet existed, of greater cohesive power than any which has yet been conceived. This Teutonic conception of Empire is of a growth on lines differing widely from

those on which the Roman Empire uprose. That grew by force of conquest and the endeavour to assimilate all peoples which came within its reach. The effort was a prodigious one, and it was crowned with unprecedented success. But a time came when this huge organism exceeded the size conducive to successful life on the given method of its structure, and, like the giant products of evolution, it passed away. Or perhaps its disintegration may be better compared to that of the primitive cell, which, having exceeded the size conducive to successful life under the given complexity of its structure, is forced to divide into two parts or more, each part striking out on independent lines, some to exist and grow as separate units, some to become absorbed in the existence of other organisms.

It was not from among these separated parts that the new ideal of Empire uprose, but from among those more backward and less highly organised communities the shock of whose impact had caused the disintegration of the older Empire. These later offshoots of the Aryan stock had remained free from many of the conscious vices as well as from the civilisation of the early despotisms. As they amalgamated with some of the conquered peoples, or themselves assimilated others, appropriating all the territory they could command, new units were gradually shaped out, each forming a

centre of strife and each aiming at securing the means to itself, first of existence, then of growth. During that seething time of communities which followed the disintegration of the Roman Empire, when the surrounding peoples, like wolves, bore down on that great organism and preyed on its outlying parts, the boundaries of the different European nationalities were continually shifting and changing. When, after some centuries, they had begun to take form, a quieter period followed among the growing units. But as they grew and the necessity of expansion again beset them, with the tendency of all growth to proceed in the direction of least resistance, they turned from Europe to less peopled lands. The small or loosely compact tribes which occupied these more distant territories were easily driven off or absorbed, and their place was taken by offshoots from the more highly complex communities.

The earliest offshoots of the Aryan stock which had separated off to individual life before history began lost sight, as time went on, of the root from which they grew. Though this separation was apparently effected in a friendly spirit, and took place only from the recognition of the need of securing the means of existence for the growing numbers, their further procedure was so greatly modified by their new environment, and the distance to which they

found themselves removed was in some cases so great, that the affinity between parent and offspring could no longer be recognised. But when among these separated offshoots at a later time the needs of growth again necessitated further migrations, these were effected on different lines, and the improved means of communication kept the offspring in mind of their affinities. Some have broken off to independent life; but some, when cleavage seemed imminent, remain voluntarily adherent to the parent stock and are apparently in the process of formation, through bonds of a common interest, into the larger Imperial unit of which the possibility is coming into being.

If this method of growth can be traced through the earlier forms into which life has successfully developed — namely, the method which proceeds by the shifting from time to time of the individual centre so as to admit several related centres within the compass of one unit, from the centre of which further growth proceeds — it seems probable that by the same method the units of nation will achieve their further development, since only by such increase in complexity has cohesion been made to keep pace with increase in size.

It remains for the future to show whether there may not be a further harking back among related individuals of nation, whether the Teutonic peoples may not yet reunite under the

impulse of a sense of common parentage, and the affinity produced by common methods of tolerant control. Whether even all Aryans may not eventually be led to realise their affinities as tolerance becomes more audibly the keynote to which the harmonies of human development are being set in tune.

VII

THE UNIT FROM THE STANDPOINT
OF THE INDIVIDUAL

VII

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To the individual to be born is, as it were, to be sent to prison ; each living thing is condemned throughout life to submit to the bondage of its own personality ; its eyes are but as prison bars through which it looks upon the features of the world. And although it is given to man to rise, on the wings of mind, above the limitations of his individual outlook, and although from the bird's-eye point of view which his thought can thus command he has an ever-widening survey of the world, his very thoughts themselves are captive, and are held in bondage by the limitations of the personality from which they emanate.

Man's vision having been so circumscribed, the appearances of things have tended continually to mislead him. He had studied the heavens for more than thirty centuries before the conception began to dawn upon his mind that his world's place in the universe was not at the centre of everything, that the seeming daily movement round him of the sun, moon, and

stars was only an appearance, and the lesson of his individual significance is one which each one for himself is slow to learn as well. The A B C may be taught him quickly and sharply, at a cost of tears ; but the after chapters are neglected or studied with but half a heart. The conditions of his physical sight, moreover, tend to foster his delusions, since to the physical eye near things assume undue proportions, and hide things as great or greater which are farther off. To each individual the things which are round himself appear to enclose him as with a boundary wall, while things beyond, in their turn surrounding others, appear to dwindle in proportion according to their distance. A row of trees or houses near at hand will wipe out the features of the country-side for miles, a near hill will hide more distant mountains, and these far ranges on beyond. In infancy the eye can be sensible of the things around it only under the aspect in which perspective falsifies their apparent size, and their apparent relations. They must seem to it flat as though pictured on a wall. And although with the dawn of consciousness the vision of the mind gradually corrects the distorted impressions of the physical eye, so that the child finds it can move in and out among the things about it and realise their actual relations to himself and to each other—still the mind's eye again, in its turn, is subject to conditions which falsify its outlook. To each

individual the circumstances and events of his own experience assume proportions of a delusive size, they stand round and block out from consideration the circumstances and events which affect those about him ; the more remote those circumstances and events from his own experience the less the consideration he accords them. It is only by continually rising in thought above the boundary walls which enclose the mind, that the real proportions of the things of self and the things of others is made evident to human consciousness. And thought can thus take wing only against a force of insistent instinct as imperative in its action as the force of gravitation.

The same individual instinct tends to obscure the relation between cause and effect in human conduct. The man who, being only part of a larger whole, seeks his own good alone is led by instinct in a direction where it cannot be found. Instinct indicates the road by which he may travel easily to his goal, and blurs the reading of the words which would show him that the road leads where he does not want to go. To the individual instinct, for instance, it seems evident that in the endeavour to secure his own well-being he would succeed best who directly sought his own. And if the human being constituted the ultimate human individual, each one would best find his own good by directly seeking it. But if, as here maintained, the individual

with man is the larger community, of which human beings form only the component parts, then good can be found by each human being only indirectly, as in different degrees he seeks the good of all within the community to whom he is affiliated and over whom his influence extends. By acting in pursuit of his own welfare alone he puts a strain upon the bonds by which he is held to all members of the community, and upon the bonds by which they are held to him. He thus puts a strain upon the cohesion of the community itself. But since cohesion is essential to the existence of a community, the action of the individual who pursues his own interests alone is injurious to the interests of the community, and so ultimately to himself as one of its component parts. Human welfare has thus become largely contingent on the relationship which is maintained between the human being and his fellows, since only when the relation is rightly maintained can cohesion, which is essential to the existence of the community, and so to the well-being of its individual members, be furthered. If this be granted, then that which man most needs in life is a condition of right adjustment to the requirements of the different individuals within the community to which he is affiliated. If he can attain to conditions of specialisation to the highest uses, maintaining at the same time this right adjustment, he may be said, pre-eminently,

to succeed ; but if he aims mainly at the gratification of his individual instincts at the expense of this right adjustment, even if he attains his end, even if he is lifted to wealth or high position by his endeavour—in the progressive human sense, as the component part of a community, he can only be said to have failed. He may find that which he seeks, but not that which as a human being he needs. On the other hand, if he maintains the right adjustment, without attaining to a high place or the gratification of primal instinct, he has succeeded in the most essential requirement of a member of a community. He has secured the good will and fellowship of those to whom, in different degrees, he is affiliated, without which other gains fail to satisfy him.

Broad divisions, however, between right and wrong doing in human conduct are the exceptions, the adjustment is more often true with regard to one relationship and faulty with regard to another. Or the intention may be true, while the intellect may be misguided as to the direction in which progress lies.

The individual instinct has thus continually to undergo modification and correction at the hands of experience. And although the human race, as such, has made some way in the study of the larger requirement, by each child on his entrance into life the whole lesson is to learn. He is born to his own seeming, free, like his

primitive ancestors, to follow his own instincts. As, during the pre-natal period of his existence, the cells of his physical organism recapitulate rapidly and unconsciously the different stages of their development, in much the same way, on his entrance into separate life as a distinct, but still component, part of that still more complex organism, the human community, he has to recapitulate rapidly, through the medium of his consciousness, the different stages of moral development through which those organisms have passed. Physically, before birth, the cells within him have been hurried through the successive stages of differentiation from the single cell which performs all functions up to the highly specialised condition required by an organism, in which the nutritive, reproductive, nervous, and other systems are developed to their highest existing capacity ; and morally on his entrance on separate life he has to pass through the successive stages of development from the member of the family unit, which performs all functions, up to the specialised condition required by the unit of nation, in which systems of supply, of growth, of religious and civil government, are specialised to the point at which the given era finds them specialised.

The new and finer tissue by which human communities are united within themselves, the medium of sympathetic feeling born of consciousness of law, has to be worked into a

binding texture which shall hold him by its invisible strands in close union with those members of the community with whom he is affiliated ; and again in a lesser degree with the members of the larger systems of occupation within the community for which he has to become differentiated ; and again with the unit of tribe or nation or Empire into which he has been born. From the sense of a freedom which is unreal though it seems to be his, he has to be brought under a bondage which is real, even if never fully recognised.

In infancy and early childhood he belongs to the family stage, his position as member of society and of the State is not yet recognised. He is protected from the results of his own evil actions where his country's laws are concerned, but he is coerced and moulded into shape on more or less despotic lines by parental or educational authority, and suffers the minor, home-made penalties of disobedience.

In normal individuals only the primitive instincts have to be restrained at this stage ; the evils arising from the morbid action of consciousness on instinct are, as a rule, the development of later years.

Through this early stage of moral development he is hurried by those about him, a few years working a change in the individual which it has taken untold ages to effect in the human race. The initial stages of sympathetic feeling

are evolved in him through sufferings in his own person, the need of consideration for the feelings of others is instilled into him by enlightenment as to his own feelings, he learns what pain is by being pained. He is taught to restrain his own individual instincts in the interest of others, whose interests in reality are his ; but where the demands of this wider law are not evident, the leverage of the motives for self-restraint employed by the religious system of the State to which he belongs is brought to bear in shaping him to the service of the community. Meanwhile, such knowledge as the mind of man at the time has been able to accumulate, and as the capacity of the individual enables him to receive, is conveyed to his mind in forms as easy as may be of mental digestion.

At a later period the despotic gives way to the more constitutional method of control, and eventually, having been differentiated for one or other function in the community, family protection is removed, the individual has to come face to face with the results of his own actions and himself suffers the legal penalties of disobedience if he runs counter to his country's laws. He becomes a component part of the State to which his allegiance is required, as his allegiance to the family interest, retrospective and prospective, is required throughout life.

He comes also into more immediate and

conscious contact with the great unworded law of social opinion which tends to hold him in his place, in much the same way as a given cell in his physical organism is held in place by the pressure of neighbouring cells. The standard of this law is usually on a higher plane than the standard of the existing law of the State which it is always manipulating and raising, although in a progressive state it lags behind that set by the religious ideal which dominates the State ideal.

The more happily placed in an advanced community, when freed from parental control, find themselves but little shackled by the penal laws of the state to which they belong. These are not deterred from murder, theft, or fraud by fear of human punishment, for, through cultivation of sympathetic feeling which the higher religious law demands, possibly also through an inherited instinct of self-restraint, they have become incapable of disregarding the interests of their fellows to the extent which killing, stealing, or fraudulent procedure would imply. And although a wide range of capacity to disregard the interests of his fellow-men remains with men, this limit of capacity is gradually being narrowed down, and the tendency is always in the direction of further shrinkage. Moreover, new instincts are arising side by side with, though at the expense of, the individual instinct ; and become, in turn, inherited ; in-

stincts which centre in the larger units and work from thence. The family instinct has already become an inheritance which law reinforces but does not create, and wider social and national instincts are realised by the individual and become essential factors in controlling thought and conduct. The demand of the greater over the lesser instincts assumes to man's mind the semblance of an echo within himself of a voice speaking from a tribunal whose degrees transcend his understanding, and he does not question, though he may disregard, the higher claim of this inner voice over the instinct which impels him to regard his own ends only.

But the voice of conscience, representing the higher ideals of religious systems, the pressure of social opinion, the State laws, the family rule in childhood, appear all to be in their different degrees but fragmentary reflections of the great Eternal laws of progress as applied to the development of the given unit ; of those laws which rule the motions of suns and worlds and ensure their bondage into systems, and again into systems of systems ; of the working of the same laws in the development of life's forms by means of the bondage of cells into larger organisms, and again of these larger organisms into units of family, tribe, nation. The great agency works on uniformly and inexorably, moulding suns and worlds and all existences

into the forms which it demands, proceeding, as it would appear to the finite understanding, on lines of recklessness and waste, but without change and without comment moving on to its unsearchable ends. Unable to resist or to adjust themselves, the forms of life which preceded man unconsciously worked in with, or drifted away from, the main line of development, till the progressive forms were brought to a stage where consciousness began to reveal to them the near features of the machinery of law which fashions all things ; till upon nascent man began to dawn the possibility of consciously adjusting his being to the great onward movement—to the will of God—or of resisting in pursuit of that which instinct represented as his individual good. And henceforward the proportion to which he adjusted himself became the main factor in deciding the further possibilities of the larger units which by this means were being evolved, and whose cohesion and growth he thus hindered or promoted.

And each individual of the human race, as he arrives at independent consciousness, has to face anew this great question of adjustment. He has to recapitulate within himself the experience of the race on being brought into touch with the realities of the unseen, and to decide, on such data as he can command, whether he shall resist, and, obeying an inherited instinct, make for what seems to be his individual good ; or

whether he shall submit to the great ordering of the universe, and, in obedience to that which he can discern of its demands, shape his actions to its dictates. These may not be the terms in which he represents to himself his attitude of resistance or submission, but, in substance, this seems to be the open question which underlies man's choice. He may be sufficiently far on his way morally when the question arises to be obedient by instinct and of choice to the claims of his country, or of social law; but there remains always the higher demand on conduct of his religious system, and the question as to resistance or surrender remains in connection with the higher ideal.

There are many who, on facing the need of decision, turn away and drift on with the tide, submitting here, resisting there, carried on in the progressive way, perhaps, by the family or the social or even the religious instinct, and succeeding or failing, since so they help the unit to succeed or fail only in so far as they are carried with, or, as instinct impels them, against the current of the wider aims. But to others the moment of decision comes as a great crisis accentuated and reinforced by stress of the emotions—those mighty winds which have wrecked so many a sturdy ship, while they have filled the sails of thousands. These are the more forceful beings who cannot drift, who bring all their energies to bear on resistance,

and again, turning round, employ the glad energies let loose by surrender in an eager and strenuous obedience.¹

Again, with others the process of conscious adjustment or of conversion is gradually achieved, the crisis is broken up into fragments and scattered throughout a lifetime. The movement may be steadily progressive, but it would be difficult to them to recognise any moment of life as the decisive moment when the conscious process of adjustment was initiated. It is with these as if they had been unconsciously carried past the time of crisis and set on the progressive way unawares. In many, if not most, religious systems provision is made for bringing to bear on the advancing consciousness of the members of communities at a given period of development this need of self-conscious adjustment of the individual to the Eternal laws of life.

The great ultimate laws are of necessity but imperfectly represented by the religious systems which embody them, the systems may, moreover, be distorted by false assumptions, may lead on to deceptive issues, they may even possess features adverse to their own main tendencies. But a religious system, however feeble the conception it may embody, appears to be an essential feature in the formation of communities. In the absence of the power

¹ See "Varieties of Religious Experience," Prof. William James, Lecture IX.

rightly to realise the great ultimate laws, a tangible creed, adequate to bring them within touch of the community, however inadequate rightly to represent their demands, cannot be dispensed with. This conclusion seems to be justified by the fact that no community is found existing without such a creed. Abstract thought demands a concrete medium by which it can be borne from mind to mind—as a fluid can only be carried in a vessel that is solid—and it takes a tangible creed to convey to the human community as a whole some efficient conception of the realities of the unseen Infinite and of the demands made on conduct by the Force which transcends man's control. The creed stands for the vessel which conveys so much of the unknown Source of all power and purpose as the community can make its own. But since progressive communities are, of necessity, expanding organisms, and since the human power of conception grows with their growth, the creed to be adequate must, of necessity, be able to expand with the expansion of the organism itself. When once the creed has become stereotyped as itself an object of reverence, in place of that which it strives to reveal, its power to grow ceases and degeneration sets in.

The substantive conceptions of the Deity which could be pictured in wood or stone, or embodied in living human beings, or the remote

and vivifying sun, have passed away ; but the ideals which remain have still to be shaped out in dogmas and exact definitions of descriptive words, which, in their turn, become fossilised and inadequate as final representations of that which no human mind can presume to have rightly apprehended. And it would seem that those stereotyped dogmas of human make, which have usurped the reverence and worship of the communities, may, in their turn, have to pass away with the more tangible idols to make room for wider conceptions.

But words in their free state constitute an elastic medium, being capable themselves of growth and development. They themselves are able to expand so as to convey larger and wider conceptions of all that lies in the vast region of the yet unknown. And if fossilised dogmas become inadequate, living words still remain to grow with the growth of man's power of conceiving new truths in connection with the eternal Verities which endure unchanged while man's apprehension of them is shifting and enlarging.

When, in the past, the more advanced minds within a community, on being brought face to face with the question of adjustment, have found their creed inadequate to represent to them any efficient conception of the unseen Force which controls the universe, some have been tempted to cast it aside, and have imagined

themselves to be in revolt against God and law, whereas, in reality, they have been in revolt only against the narrow conception of God and law which their creed has imposed. If such spirit of revolt gains ground and spreads, it leads inevitably to disaster for the community. The impetus of the forsaken faith may be sufficient for the adult life to carry it on, but the children inevitably suffer during the seeding time of impressions, and the growth of character from lack of the implanting of motives suitable to their mental stature and capable of enforcing restraint and of moulding the expanding consciousness. If, as it would appear, the coercive force of a religious control is as essential to the formation of communities as the coercive force of a nervous system is to the animal organism, then the sense of severance from that force in the adult minds which willy-nilly are moulding the young minds into shape, must weaken their educative power ; and a renewed insistence of the individual instinct must arise in individuals whose consciousness is freed from efficient motives for its restraint.

But many thinkers, their creed disowned, have recognised that God and law lie behind all creeds, and facing the position anew, they have reformed a conception which could be brought to bear on the general consciousness. But even then a period of disruption has ensued. Elements of antagonism between the

holders of the old faith and the new have become accentuated, and have led on to further disruption. Or perhaps the creed so reformed has been beyond the mental grasp of the community within which it has been formulated, and has passed away to more progressive communities, taking in its train those wider minds whose influence tended to promote the community's expansion. This was the case with Christianity, this was the case, to a great extent, with Buddhism.

Growth on the method of compactness in religious apprehension thus reaches a point where further growth becomes impossible without disruption. And when the creed has become finally stereotyped, or when human authority which assumes a Divine Sanction puts its veto on intellectual advance, such a result appears to have been inevitable. The religious system which ensured existence, like the enclosing shell of the invertebrates, becomes a bar to further growth. But human authority in the spiritual domain is becoming more and more remotely assertive with the passing of the years, and since the medium used in conveying the best attainable conception of the Deity and of His Will is itself capable of expansion and yields to the advance of thought, it would seem possible that in matters of faith growth might eventually proceed on the wider and freer vertebrate lines, where no protective

shell has to be shed from time to time in order that the organism may expand. It would seem possible that the two agencies by means of which mankind looks out into the unknown—the scientific and the religious faculties, which in their origin are one—might eventually realise their common aim and their common interest ; that the religious faculty might turn to science for new knowledge of existing law ; and that science, recognising the need of bringing the leverage of law to bear on the hearts of men, might work together with the religious faculty in moulding it to a form in which it should be most effectively operative.

When, therefore, in presence of the question of adjustment at the present time the individual finds himself circumscribed by the intellectual limits of the religious system, by means of which the existence of his community has been secured—he is met by new uncertainties, even when he accepts the attitude of surrender to the Eternal Will. If his religious system is finally stereotyped by human authority, and so incapable of expansion, he can have no choice but to break away. But the question arises as to whether the wider existing systems are not capable of further expansion, the confining walls being merely superficial, and whether, from the point of view of the community, the individual may not best help its growth by remaining allied to its religious

system, and so holding within its confines the elements of enlargement which the wider conception implies. May not the system in the process of superficial hardening become disintegrated by the strain from within of the wider ideals, and so gradually enlarge its boundaries to keep pace with the growth of the community itself? From the point of view of the individual, it would seem that his isolation from a common ideal must prove a deterrent to his moral advance, since he is but the component part of a larger whole, the force of which as it moves increases with the gathered energy which accrues from a common impulse in any one direction. By separating himself from his religious system he separates himself from the impetus of the common impulse.

The question of sincerity to the intellectual attitude of his community's religious system may give him pause. But if it be granted that the intellectual attitude of man to God and law of necessity changes with his advance in power of apprehension, it must be granted that the intellectual attitude of man's mind at a given time is a non-essential factor of his religious system, however essential it may seem to some of its members; whereas the effort after the adjustment of his will to the Divine demands is the essential factor, and the common ground for the existence of all systems. It must follow, therefore, that the position which

best helps the individual to adjust his will to the higher demands, must be the position in which he best helps the well-being of the community, and so, ultimately and indirectly, his own well-being. Many questions of right and wrong doing take on new aspects when the welfare of the whole community is recognised as the main point at issue, rather than the attitude of the individual towards intellectual apprehensions which can never be final, and so never of essential importance.

VIII

MORAL ADVANCE

VIII

MORAL ADVANCE

BUT beyond the question as to the attitude of the individual towards the intellectual demands of the creed or religious system to which he belongs, there remains a question of morals which recurs again and again in forms new and old, to which no final answer can be forthcoming, since the limits within which the answer is to be found are continually shifting and enlarging their ground.

This question has to do with the exact degree to which the individual should restrain the individual instinct which has been implanted within him as an inheritance from the ages, in favour of the larger units which have grown out of the lesser. For, on the view which is here suggested, the increase in size of the unit of strife which has proceeded from age to age, and is still proceeding, has been effected, not by a uniformly continuous growth of the individual from a single centre, but by a slow shifting from time to time of the individual centre so as to enable it to include several related individuals within the compass of one unit.

Further growth has been achieved by growth of the contained individuals, but their individual existence has become merged in the existence of the new unit. By thus ensuring growth from many contained centres, the interest of each of which has become subservient to the interest of the newly found centre of them all, a new complexity has been introduced together with an increased possibility of enlargement.

The centre of the unit of strife was so shifted in the first place when the simple cell, having achieved its highest possibility of differentiation and of growth as a single cell, united with its offspring, first temporarily, then permanently, to form a larger individual. It shifted again when the most highly differentiated of the resultant individuals, having attained to the most effectual size as single complex individuals, united with their offspring to form the larger units of family and community. It shifted again when, with the human race, the development of the nervous system having brought man into touch with universal law, he became consciously the subject of its demands. Cohesion being consciously fostered within communities, it became possible for tribes, which would otherwise have lost sight of their common ancestry under stress of competition, to remain in touch with each other, and gradually the governing centre, which had included only the

tribe, was shifted so as to enable many affiliated tribes to remain under one sway, and the new unit of nation was the result.

But each incorporated unit as the centre shifts remains as such unit, within the larger individual. The cells remain as cells, within the highly differentiated community which, under control of the nervous system, constitutes the human individual. In this physical welding together of cells consciousness had no part, and the physical process continues to be pursued in man, as in all animal organisms, independently of his option or control. He cannot by taking thought add one cubit to his stature. He cannot coerce the cells of which he is composed into co-operating towards his well-being ; he can only endeavour to provide the environment which is best suited to their beneficial working.

Again, the individual unit, as such, remains within the family unit, and both individual and family unit remain within the tribal, and all three within the unit of nation. With the shifting of the centre, however, in human communities the change has been one of degree rather than of kind, there has been no great change in the conditions of cohesion, such as that which obtained when the cell united with its allied cells to form the larger individual, or when the physically bound community shifted its centre towards the centre of the morally bound family

unit. The vast size of human communities has been attained to through a continuous increase of moral cohesion, of which each component individual has become consciously a centre of growth.

But since each unit within the national unit has, in its turn, passed through the stage of being an independent individual, as such it retains the instinct to act for its own interest and its own advancement. It was clearly essential to the individual before the dawn of consciousness to act in his own interest alone while he was the most complex unit in existence, since to have subordinated his interests to those of any other individual (except those of his offspring during their helpless stage) would have implied failure to exist for himself and degeneration for the individual to whom those interests were sacrificed. But as the family unit became more and more permanent it was clearly essential that the parents should still further subordinate their interests to those of their young, since only those families in which the parents subordinated their individual instincts could have survived when the stage was reached at which the increase of individual size on the given lines of complexity was no longer a guarantee of success. This permanent deflection of the individual aim in the family interest survives in all subsequent communities, whatever may be the size to which they attain.

In a similar way it could no longer profit the unit of family when the unit of strife had reached the tribal stage, to act only in the family interest, since tribes in which the immediate family claims were not subordinated in times of stress to the tribal demands would have failed in competition with other tribes whose component parts were more united in aim. A temporary advantage might always have been derived from selfish individual or family action, but the ultimate loss must have been inevitable.

So again with the unit of tribe, when the unit of nation had been arrived at. That nation would have been the most successful in which, other things being equal, the greatest cohesion existed among the component tribes. The tribal feeling in advanced nations, however, has merged itself to a great extent in other relationships of mind and occupation, in affinities which grow up between members of a common social grade, or a common profession, trade, or calling. But in each individual member of a nation there is at least a treble deflection of instinct, each instinct in its narrow, undeflected form having been essential in its turn to the preservation of the more and more complex communities, and each having had to be extended in the process of time, so as to be made more inclusive. Those units in which the law of self-preservation has been unable to give

place in its time to the law of growth, having been driven to one side, leaving the more expansive to pass on.

Thus the eternal question of all morals, namely, the exact point at which the claims of the lesser unit must give place before the greater, the need of existence to the need of growth, has arisen again and again to confront mankind. It confronts the unit as a whole in times of political crisis, and it confronts each individual of the unit from day to day, as he adjusts his action to the needs of the lesser units which survive within the greater, the interests of which, in different degrees, he is compelled to make his own.

His action, moreover, has to be ruled on different levels of moral advancement according to the position which he holds within the community, and in proportion as he is taking action for the unit as a whole, or for himself as a component part of the community. His action as one who controls in any degree the State, when he is acting in the interests of the State, must be on a lower level than his action as one of its individual members. The morality of the nation, like the morality of each individual of highest existing complexity, is that of the primitive cell which grasps and holds that it may live and grow. Like the primitive cell in conflict with other cells, it is compelled, as a nation, to act on lines of single self-interest

when in conflict with other nations. Political morality is therefore of necessity on a lower level than individual morality, although this, in its turn, in rising is always uplifting the ideal of the greater body politic. The individual who takes any considerable share in the function of national control, while he rules his own aims on the highest lines within his capacity, has to rule his political aims on the lower plane demanded of the unit of strife of highest existing complexity. This remains, as it has always been, the primitive pursuit of single self-interest. If he endeavours, prematurely, to bring the higher moral ideals which rule his individual aims into his political code, he endangers the very existence of the unit which he seeks to benefit.

But the softening of antagonism between the individuals which compose the units of nation inevitably tends to soften the antagonism which has been needful to the consolidation of the units of nation themselves. Travel and interchange of thought and opinion in times of peace, when common essential interests are not at stake, lead on to a wider understanding and sympathy among the progressive peoples, who gain in tolerance towards each other as the individuals composing them gain in tolerance among themselves. The instinct of the primitive struggle to exist and grow remains; but the sense of the ultimate brotherhood of man has a softening influence which makes itself felt to

some degree, even in moments when the clash of interests is paramount. The destruction of individuals, which, on prescribed lines, is still an essential condition of the strife of units, is being carried on in a manner more and more humane. A horror of war is filtering through the substance of which the human unit is composed, the last to give evidence of it being of necessity those individuals who are specialised to defend and extend the limits of the community. There are evidences, moreover, of a growing tendency to decide national differences by means of temporarily created courts of arbitration, which assume for the moment the function of courts for the administration of justice within the existing communities themselves. And although international law can hardly be said to have a substantial existence until a generally accepted court of appeal can be created and recognised, such law has already assumed the form of a defined branch of study, and in times of peace its provisions are being developed and maintained.

Under the influence of this wider extension of sympathetic relationship, a further shifting of the centre of the national unit is coming into view, since the offshoots of nations show a tendency to remain in touch with the nation from which they sprang. Instead of the instinctive antagonism between parent and offspring which tends to arise when stress of

competition puts a strain on the sense of common interest, a new and wider feeling seems to be gaining ground, a sense of more permanent community of aim and interest, which brings into view the formation of a yet larger and more efficient unit in the struggle for existence. It remains for each nation to decide whether the time has come when such an extension of the unit is possible under the given conditions of cohesion on which it exists ; to decide whether it is able to withstand the strain on its component parts involved in a further subordination of their interests to the interests of the greater Imperial unit.

But while the action of the individual, in so far as it regards the State in its relation to other States, has thus to be ruled on the intolerant lines of the unit of highest complexity—until the moment when further growth demands the suppression of intolerance with regard to its own offspring—the actions of the individual, on the other hand, as component part of the State in his relation to its other component parts has to be ruled on lines of tolerance of ever-increasing force and extension. Since the success of the nation is dependent on the cohesion thus created within itself, it is as essential that the component individuals should cultivate tolerance and sympathy among themselves, as it is essential that the unit to which they belong should regard

its own interests alone in its strife with competing units.

But the instinct of strife remains though the nature of the struggle has undergone a change. Each component individual, though he no longer strives for life, still strives for better conditions of existence during his term of life ; by which strife the condition of the whole unit is continually being advanced. But since he is allied to all the individuals within the nation by the sense of a common interest in the success of the nation ; and to all who are differentiated for exercise of a common function by the endeavour to procure the more efficient performance of that function ; and while to his family he is held by bonds still more essential and secure, it is evident that, in striving for better conditions, he is incapable of acting on the old free lines of primitive self-seeking. If he acts in his own interests alone his action is injurious, in different degrees, to all the units to which he is allied, and being himself a part of those units, he suffers with them from the injuries which he inflicts. "That which is not good for the swarm, neither is it good for the bee," truly said Marcus Aurelius.

While, therefore, the instinct of antagonism is relegated to the State as the most highly complex unit, the energies set free by exemption from this primal strife are employed by man in breaking down the inherited instincts

of antagonism within itself, which have been essential in their time and degree to the existence of the contained units, but which are no longer needed in the same degree when the interests of all are recognised as being at one with his own. It is only when these antagonisms break down that way is made for the to and fro passage of cohesive sympathy which is born out of the sense of a common interest.

But since the process of welding the unit is being accomplished by means of multiplied centres of cohesion, each of which conduces to the formation of bonds of sympathy which lessen in intensity as they increase in extension —each individual, as such centre, in the endeavour to further the process, has to decide as to the exact degree to which his regard for the nearer interests is to be relaxed in relation to those more remote. In the conflict of instincts it will generally be allowed that he would show most moral advancement who chose the widest interest for his allegiance ; while, on the other hand, as with the political unit, he who acted on a code of disinterestedness in advance of his time would endanger the very unit he sought to benefit ; the highest goodness, at all times, being thus a question of the head as well as of the heart, of the judgment as well as of the intentions. If he neglected the lesser and more constraining unit

in favour of the larger, to which a lesser degree of allegiance is required, his action, though it might be disinterested, would fail to achieve the end at which it aimed. If, for instance, the bread-winner of a family worked for its benefit regardless of his own health, or if a mother in a similar way ignored her personal well-being in care for her children, such action would eventually prove injurious to the family and would lack in the intellectual element of moral advance. Or again, if the father or mother were to neglect the well-being of the family in furtherance of schemes for benefiting a larger social circle, or the nation, or mankind in general, such action would eventually be injurious to the nation, since it would risk failure in securing the efficiency of the family as one of its component parts. To one who held himself aloof from forming family responsibilities this, of course, would not apply in the same degree; such an one would be more free to risk his life for the benefit of others or to devote himself to the larger welfare, since, by such action, no nearer claims would be neglected. Thus with the family and social, as with the political unit, the individual has to act on different levels of disinterestedness in proportion as to whether he acts as its leader, or as one of its component parts.

The continual trend of moral advance in the direction of enabling the individual to regard

in his action units of wider and wider extent is made evident by the inclusion of increasing numbers in the function of control of the unit. The part taken may be great or small, but the tendency of progress is in the direction of permitting each individual to take action which regards the welfare of the unit as a whole, as well as the welfare of the lesser component units. By this extension of the scope of individual interest the instinct of self-seeking is continually being enlarged, and the possibility of acting in the interest of the single self as continually restricted. The movement of advance is also testified to by the fact that provision at times is made, as by the endowment of research, for freeing given members of the community from the pressure of claims which might hinder them from pursuing the wider aims which it is felt they are capable of furthering. And although such procedure may as yet be rare, it is suggestive, in so far as it exists, of greater possibilities of a similar kind. Moreover, the fact that many members of the community specialise themselves to regard the interests of others less fortunate than themselves, serves to minimise the evil effects arising from action both well and ill meaning, as well as from the results of disaster which neither good nor evil intention is able to control.

But beyond the need of restraining instinct among the component parts of a unit, which,

to progress, must always be extending and increasing in cohesion; and beyond the moral considerations involved in fixing the pace at which the widening of interests to this end can safely proceed, further complications exist within human communities, produced by the morbid action of mind on instinct and the difficulties involved when the instinct, reinforced by mind, works in an organism whose cohesion is secured by the restraint of self-interest. Simple questions of morals become obscured by the institution of unembodied codes on different levels of retrogression, as, for instance, in the case of the commercial code, which is not only fixed on a lower level of consideration for others than the individual code, but in the lower provisions of which an ability to take advantage of the ignorance or undue confidence of others is frequently a feature of success. Such a code can exist only by preying on the helplessness of the less competent, and though, within certain limits, its provisions may be socially condoned under the present conditions of moral achievement, it seems evident that it is of the nature of a morbid growth, and must gradually give place, in a progressive community, before the advance of wider ideals of action for the welfare of the unit as a whole. While such codes exist they complicate decisions as to right action in the minds of some who would desire conscien-

tiously to adjust themselves to the demands of Eternal Law. The bread-winner of a family, for instance, may feel himself compelled to conform to the lower conditions of the unworded commercial code on occasions when, by so doing, he enables his family to live, or to be better equipped for life. It is a difficult point at times to decide as to the degree to which conformity to such a code is demanded by the individual or family well-being, while such a code is within the requirements of law and is admitted by human opinion ; although, on broad lines, it seems evident that while allegiance to a code less advanced than the individual code is essential at given times to given communities, allegiance to a code which is based in any degree on accentuation of the individual instinct must, by its very nature, be detrimental to the community, and so, ultimately, to the individuals who compose it.

If the view here taken of the nature and need of control of inherited instinct be accepted, the individual who would adjust his being to the working of laws, the trend of which he dimly discerns, has no lack of employment for his instinct of struggle, though the current of his energies may be diverted from the older channels. The instinct of strife remains, its primal form being but slightly modified, in so far as his action regards his nation as such ; the instinct, in no sense free or primal but con-

strained within given limits, actuates him in his endeavour after better conditions of life for his social grade or system of occupation and his family. But the operation of instinct in all these different degrees is shared by all who go to make up the lesser units existing within the greater, and the energy thus set free has to be turned by the individual on to the task of modifying within himself the normal and abnormal action of the two instincts of existence and of growth, and of so restraining and deflecting their activities that they may conduce to the existence and growth of the communities of which he forms a part.

IX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

IX

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ON the lines suggested in these pages a steady progress of growth may be traced from the smallest living organism which the human eye by the aid of lenses can detect, through communities of these organisms, and again through communities of these communities, and again through communities of these—until the Imperial ideal itself is arrived at. The process on this view has been continuous, for although with the progressive units the centre of strife has from time to time been shifted from the individual centre to the centre of the community of related individuals, and although the nature of the binding agency employed to weld the related individuals into the new and larger unit has in each case been different, this recurrent process of shifting and of change has itself been continuous. When a given complexity of structure has been arrived at on given lines, a new complexity of structure has been necessitated by the need of further growth, and those forms which have moved on lines which ensured this needful increase in complexity have remained

on the main line of advance, leaving behind as outlying branches those forms in which a further shifting of the centre has been rendered impossible by the means taken by the individual organism to ensure separate existence.

Apparently, however, the outlying branches have been as essential to the furtherance of development as the main stem of growth itself; since with an increase in complexity of structure of a given organism an increase in complexity of that by means of which its existence and growth can be sustained becomes essential too. As the feeders become more complex they need more complex food, and the more complex feeders in their turn become the food of feeders more complex still.

The simplest and earliest form of organic existence grew, as these forms still grow, by assimilating inorganic matter, it built up a less stable structure out of simpler and more stable chemical elements or compounds. Those organic forms which branched out into the vegetable kingdom probably achieved a comparatively easy success in consequence of the facility with which these inorganic foods could be obtained; while animal organisms, which struck out on the higher lines of assimilating forms already organised, were met by the greater difficulty of securing such organisms to their need; those organisms having always succeeded best which for the longest time escaped being fed on.

The further development which led to the use as food of animal as well as of vegetable life appears to have secured still further possibilities of advance, but with the forms capable of the highest development the need of vegetable food was established as a permanent requirement before the possibility of assimilating animal food was arrived at. Forms whose structure compels them to feed exclusively on animal food are not found in the main line of advance. This in its highest pre-human stage passed through forms of which the organised diet was wholly on vegetarian lines. When, however, this necessity had become firmly established, the further power of assimilating animal food as well, appears to have conduced to further progress. With the most progressive races, namely, the Western nations, both the higher and lower forms of organised existence are assimilated, while the more exclusively animal feeders (as the Esquimaux and others) and the more exclusively vegetarian (as many Asiatic races) have fallen behind in the struggle.

The need, however, of organised vegetable and animal food, when once established, did not do away with, but was, as it were, superimposed on the need of the inorganic elements or compounds. Oxygen, water, and certain salts continued to be essential to the life of the cell in the more complex organisms, and systems for taking in these foods and for distributing

them to all the cells which composed the larger organism came into being together with systems for taking in and distributing the more complex foods.

With the evolution of the human race still more complex physical needs arose and had to be supplied. As the new and growing organism, the human community, began to arrive at proportions with which no pre-human individual or community could attempt to compete, the main line of progress passed away from all those other forms, as it had passed away in turn from the unicellular, from vegetable, and from invertebrate forms, and the human race alone remained to represent the main stem of progress through which further development could be achieved. The earlier offshoots continued to exist and grow and develop on their own lines, providing food one for the other and for the individuals of human communities ; but the ultimate struggle was removed from those earlier forms over which man gradually gained dominion, and progressive strife on the main line of advance became centred among the human communities themselves. Henceforward it lay with the greater organism, the community, to secure and supply the means of existence to all its component parts, and the possession of territory yielding the many requirements of progressive human life became an essential factor in the community's advance. As the growing tribes

and nations appropriated to their own uses the soil on which they lived, their further growth had to be determined by conflict with peoples already in possession, the conquering community absorbing into itself the earlier possessors together with their territory itself. In this way smaller or less cohesive communities became the food of those greater or more complex in structure, and intermarriage between the conquerors and the conquered infused new elements into the growing organism.

But again with the human unit, the community, the need of all the simpler forms of sustenance remains. Oxygen is needed by and supplied to all the individual cells of the human body by a system of breathing with which consciousness is unconcerned. Water, salts, vegetable and animal food are conveyed by means of other systems, with which consciousness is little concerned, though it is employed by each individual human being in his endeavour to secure a share of the supply. While the community as a whole, through the agency of its governing part, uses its force and vigilance in securing to itself, and extending the limits of, the territory which yields the simpler foods needed by the more complex food and feeders, which foods are conveyed to the individual members by systems of supply differentiated for those purposes.

But beyond these physical needs of human

communities, as a preliminary indeed to their power to expand, other needs had come into existence. With pre-human communities instinct, worked upon by natural selection, achieved their formation. Consciousness of its concrete surroundings in each member of the unit was a factor in its development, but abstract consciousness had not come into play.

It has been the aim of these pages to suggest, and as far as possible to support the suggestion, that it was the development of this abstract consciousness, which, by bringing man into relation with the greater unseen forces, led on to his unprecedented advance. The law by means of which the Universe had been evolved brought progressive existence to the point at which it became capable of recognising law. Man became dimly aware of a force working from beyond himself, which controlled his destiny, as well as of an instinct from within himself which seemed to be opposed to the action of the greater force. In so far, therefore, as he would merit the favour of the greater Force the lesser and opposing force, had to be met with resistance at his hands. With these nascent perceptions, and with the conclusions which arose out of them, inadequate and misdirected as they may have been, the religious sense took birth within man. He submitted no longer blindly to the action of law, but in so far as he could perceive its drift, he set

himself into line with its requirements. And although he could only conceive of the Supreme Force, in a concrete way under the cramped and distorted similitudes which a dawning perception of the things about him presented to his mind ; and although the individual instinct, under a guise no less concrete, appealed to his understanding only as a personality adverse to the Supreme Force—yet, that he might progress, the best conceptions which at the time he could command became factors essential to his development.

For if it be granted that the main line of progress passes through the units capable of achieving the greatest size and structural complexity ; and if, with life's highest achievement —the human race—this unit at the present time is represented by the political community, it follows that the largest and most complex political community is the unit through which development is proceeding. If it be granted, moreover, that the great unseen Force, through whose agency all development has been effected, though unperceived by the earlier of life's forms, is recognised by human communities, and if each community by its attempt to apprehend and conform to the provisions of that Force increases its power to exist and to expand, it must follow that those communities whose apprehension is most clear, and whose obedience is most effectual, must be the communities

whose survival and development are best assured.

But the finite apprehension of the community remains, and must remain, inadequate to conceive of that which is infinite. Since, however, an apprehension of law and the realisation of a supreme motive which shall make law effectual in restraining the individual instinct of its members is essential to the existence of the human community, the best ideals which can be formulated at a given time and place become essential factors in development at that time and at that place. To disregard the need of bringing the best available conception to bear on the conduct of the community would be for the community to cease to exist, to disregard the need of seeking after a better conception would be for the community to cease to progress.

A knowledge of law becomes, therefore, the needful food of man's mind and character. The physical needs of his being stand no longer alone. They remain and are essential to his existence. But the individuals of human communities having developed the new function of mind and abstract consciousness, a new mental and spiritual hunger has arisen, and new foods are needed that this function may be effectually maintained. "Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God doth man live."

The minarets and domes, the towers and spires which, the round world over, rise above the dwellings of men and point away to the outside infinite, testify to the sense of need which impels man to acknowledge the existence of a Force beyond himself which shapes his destiny, and to his sense of dependence on that Force that the life of his spiritual and moral as well as his physical nature may be sustained.

But the apprehension and assimilation of law is not concerned alone in nourishing the religious sense of man, in administering to his submission and obedience to its moral requirements, it has to be grasped and applied as well to the innumerable needs of his growing physical and mental development. It has to be applied to securing the largest available yield from the soil of territories in the possession of the community ; to dealing with the mineral yield of the earth beneath the soil, and the fashioning of its produce into implements of use on the soil itself—of use in strife with competing communities, of use in extending and diffusing the accumulated learning of the community ; to the many purposes of peaceful and warlike intent which promote the cohesion of the community and its power to expand.

The human race in its infancy had slowly to realise the causes which led to given effects, and to employ its dawning intelligence in using these realisations in ministering to its own

needs. It was sent to the school of experience to get its learning, and under that slow tuition it began to accumulate to itself stores of gathered knowledge. As the stores increased, the minds of the young of the community were nourished from those stores, and only the unlearnt knowledge was sought in the school of experience. So the young are still taught; so the adult intelligences still go to school.

Into that dark region of the Unknown which it is impelled to invade human consciousness is still feeling its way. Man endeavours "by searching to find out God." With the hand of faith outheld, as well as the hand of reason, he lays hold on all that he may. If he had not faith that there was something needful to his existence to be found he would not venture, if he had not reason wherewith to sift his findings the unessential which he brings away with the essential would overburden him, and impede his further progress. He is still so burdened and so impeded, for the sieves of one age prove too coarse for the uses of another, and his reason needs correction at the hands of further reason. He has not only to sift his findings, new and old, but from time to time he has to sift the very sieves themselves. He has to test, not only his conclusions, but the means by which those conclusions have been arrived at.

It has followed of necessity that as the scientific faculty wrested from their obscurity

the secrets of the unknown, and applied the laws so mastered to the development of the unit ; as it fought inch by inch for portions of the unknown territory which it could conquer and annex to the solid grounds of facts which could be proved, it has tended to scorn the bridge of faith by which the religious faculty has spanned this void between. The scientific faculty has worked by observation, throwing out hypotheses from time to time, and retaining or rejecting them as they have proved to be capable or incapable of bearing the weight of evidence. The religious faculty once for all threw out the great hypothesis that there exists a Force beyond man's knowledge, which "makes for righteousness," and it has persistently acted as though the hypothesis had been established, since no facts that have been brought to bear have sufficed to disprove it, or to render it unavailable for the traffic of mankind. But the religious faculty has gone farther than this. It has insisted on defining the exact nature of that Force and has stood by the final and essential nature of the definitions. It has attempted, as it were, to underpin the bridge by supports which by their very nature were unstable, and against these fictitious supports science has continually directed its blows. As proof of their instability has arisen the scientific faculty has assumed the instability of the whole fabric itself.

If, however, it be granted that the communities most effectively cognisant of, and obedient to law constitute the largest and most cohesive communities, and if righteousness consists in such knowledge of and obedience to law, then the most righteous are the largest and most cohesive communities. If, moreover, it be granted that the largest and most cohesive communities are those which best survive in competition with other communities, then the most righteous communities are those which best survive, and the existence of a Force making for righteousness is proved. The hypothesis is found to rest on solid ground for at least a part of its length.

If, moreover, without such an hypothesis, the existing state of human development could not have been arrived at, then the scaffolding and underpinning which to the religious faculty have proved the security of the hypothesis have, for the time being, been essential to the human race, that it might avail itself of its uses. The differences which have arisen have resulted from misconceptions on both sides ; but if man's reason can accept the need of the motive forces by which the soul of man has been impelled, and if the religious sense of man can accept the aid of reason in freeing his soul from trammels of which the uses are passing away, it would seem that the two might come to terms. And since it is the same end that both

are making for, their progress would assuredly be hastened by concord on the way.

In the present stage of man's ignorance that which still remains to be known is so vast that the human mind may well pause on the brink of all negative certainties, except the most sure. The dogmatism which declared the non-existence of possibilities which have assumed reality to man's intuition may prove foolish as does the dogmatism of unreasoning ignorance. Those intuitions of law the fragments of which—to use a metaphor—will not fit into the curve of any known circle, may be found to fit into the curve of a larger circle which may yet become manifest. The belief in immortality which may, it would seem, prove to be part of the narrow self-insistence which it is man's business to merge and subdue, in the light of greater laws which still lie hidden, may reveal itself as the intuition of an incommunicable truth of consciousness, a conception crude as man's earliest conceptions of the Deity were crude, but possibly destined, like them, to prove the intuition of a still unfathomable truth, one which may grow clearer as man's vision clears.¹

If we assume the process of life's development to have proceeded on the lines here suggested, the temptation is great to follow them on, where they lead into the domains of pure conjecture. Tracing them backwards beyond the range

¹ See "Human Immortality," Professor William James.

where organic life began, they lead on to the conception of a similar process of growth in size and complexity as having been at work among the elements and compounds chemically united to form the ground substance of life itself. On this view the stuff of life, like the stuff of matter, in Dalton's sense is "grained," each larger organic unit being an aggregate of smaller units, each of which in its turn is an aggregate of units smaller still. Since with inorganic matter, to explain known facts of chemistry, it had to be assumed that similar units exist consisting of aggregates of smaller units, which in their turn are aggregates of units smaller still—it seems reasonable to conjecture that these inorganic units have been arrived at by the action of the same laws of growth which have ruled the increase in size and complexity of organic units. It seems reasonable to conjecture that by the same laws the bondage of the particles of atoms into the atoms themselves, of atoms into molecules, of molecules into molecular groups which constitute the masses of the elements, and of these into compounds of less and greater complexity, may have been effected. A great uniformity of plan would thus be shown to obtain in the evolution of all existences, inorganic and organic. It has not been possible to penetrate to the nature of the change which took place when, as on this view, at the introduction of life, the

most highly complex and unstable compounds were transformed into the primordial vegetable cell;¹ but such change seems hardly more marvellous than that which was initiated at the meeting - place between existences which were evolved in unconsciousness of the law which fashioned them, and those greater units of which the component parts recognising a Supreme Force surrendered themselves to, and co-operated in, the action of that Force. The change from electrical to chemical, and from chemical to physical affinity, seems hardly so great as the change from physical to moral affinity ; the change by which individuals, each a community of highly differentiated cells physically united, entered into further union among themselves ; consciously strengthening, as best they might, the links of common interest and sympathy by which the units of family, tribe, nation are being held together. At the one point physical life originated, at the other spiritual and moral life. From the one point further progress on the main line of advance

¹ As Professor Weismann points out in "The Evolution Theory," vol. i. 368, "No inorganic molecule can be shown either to assimilate, or grow, or multiply." But in his lectures on "Electricity and Matter," Professor J. J. Thompson conceives of the Evolution of the atoms of the different elements through the agency of electrical attraction on lines of increasing structural complexity. His conception does not appear to preclude the possibility of their development having moved on the lines here suggested as ruling the growth of living organisms.

led on to the development of a consciousness of concrete existences; from the other to consciousness of abstract and unseen causes, to the threshold of a Presence of which man cannot even rightly conceive, to the foot of a throne before which he bows the knee but to which he cannot lift his eyes.

But conjecture which takes the mind backwards to the origin of life, and which conceives of the possibility of its evolution by means of the same unchanging law which has carried life through all its manifestations up to man himself, meets voids by the way over which it cannot venture safely. And if in looking backwards conjecture is waylaid by uncertainties, in looking forward to dream of the ultimate destiny of worlds and of man it is still more speedily arrested. If, however, the lines on which it is here suggested that development has proceeded in the past, be produced onwards into the immediate future, they point to a further increase in size of the communities which constitute the units of progressive strife, and to a consequent decrease in the number of the individuals which strive. They point to a growth of existing units brought about by a further holding together between parent communities and their offshoots, when the structure of those communities has been arrived at on lines of tolerance and sympathy permitting such further union. By such growth units of vast size and

cohesive power would be arrived at, and the incorporation, through conquest, of lesser communities into the very structure of the greater would continue and help such growth. It seems possible also that there should be a further union between related units which have broken off into independent existence, but in which the sense of affinity remains underneath the fact of political separation.

The Western nations—through which the line of progress obviously runs at the present moment, and through which, if that which is here assumed to be essential to the structure of a growing community be accepted, it must continue to run—are united by the bond not only of a common Aryan origin, but of a common religious faith, a faith of which the mainspring is a tolerance which transcends political boundaries, and a sense of brotherhood which induces a cohesion capable of co-existence with such tolerance. A further reunion seems possible between related individuals whose cohesion is based on a faith which is thus inclusive, and most possible between communities in which that faith is retained in its simplest and most elastic forms.

But in the process of expansion new difficulties are arising to confront the progressive peoples, since those tracts of the earth which are peopled by tribes of small size and slightly organised cohesive power are falling rapidly into the possession of the nations of the West. There

remain few, if any, unknown quantities among the peoples of the world such as existed when the Roman Empire was so easily supreme, and expansion on all sides is being restricted by the resistance to be met with from possessors already highly organised. Those venerable civilisations which existed in the East while the nations of Europe were unborn, remain to be tested. It remains to be proved whether they are united by a cohesion which shall render them capable of resistance under impact from the more cohesive forces of the Western world, or whether, like some structure which holds together simply because no well-directed blow has revealed its lines of cleavage, they are destined to break up under assaults from the younger powers.¹ If success lies with those units which are possessed at once of the most firm cohesive power and the greatest capacity for growth, then it would appear that the East is destined to succumb to the West as the West still further outgrows its confines, and having exhausted the regions of least resistance, is compelled to expand in the direction of the greater.

Carrying on the idea of the growth of the units of progressive strife and their absorption of the lesser units away into the far future, the question arises as to what must follow when the last barrier between the last conflicting units

¹ A question which Japan, for its own part, appears to be answering in the negative.

is broken down. If the prophet's dream of peace were fulfilled, and if all mankind were united into one vast unit, by what means would further development be effected? Is it conceivable that in some far time man's apprehension of Eternal Law may be so greatly quickened that the inner prompting to obey that law will be sufficient without the stimulus of strife, that the sense of personal self-insistence may be so modified and deflected that progress may still obtain by means of some agency operating through the medium of peace? Or is it possible that greater ideals still may be conceived, that wider possibilities of union may open out before man's mind? There can be little doubt that man, as man, has entered upon new affinities, that his conceptions of being are widening. While his own individual good has ceased to be the bound of his aspirations, the planet on which he strives has ceased to be the bound of his mental vision. With the dawn of consciousness he began to conceive of existences beyond his own, with the growth of consciousness the unseen and uncomprehended are assuming larger proportions to his mind. He is beginning to apprehend a Universe in which his world may count but as a grain of dust, the existence of a vast, unfathomable scheme into which his being fits. He is conscious of a sense of spiritual relation to the Source and Centre of all Law as he himself aims consciously at fulfilling that

which he can conceive of Law. But he stands overwhelmed at the sense of insignificance which assails him as he strains his eyes towards the mighty Stage of the Universe, where, beyond his vision's bound, so great a drama is being enacted—a drama in which all existence unconsciously, and he himself with growing consciousness, is compelled to play a part. He begins to conceive the possibility that his little world, even the seemingly great system in which his world revolves, may hold a place in relation to the great Eternal Scheme such only as an individual cell holds to the human body, such as an individual human being holds to the greater body politic.

But here his imagination is arrested—the visible lines of progress are lost sight of in impenetrable mist. In the presence of the inscrutable secrets of the Infinite man has no choice but to acquiesce in the demands of ultimate Wisdom, holding in his soul the remembrance of those vast provinces of thought into which he must use his best strength to penetrate, of those accumulating stores of recognised law which he must use his utmost effort to obey.

